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COLONIAL QUESTION

Being Essays on

IMPERIAL FEDERALISM

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"GINX'S BABY"

AUTHOR'S EDITION.

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## PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

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The Publishers have great pleasure in bringing before the public of the Dominion the following essays by the author of "Ginx's Baby."

They have attracted much attention in England where the periodicals in which they appear have a large circulation.

Their circulation in Canada is however limited ; while the subjects discussed are of the utmost importance to the Canadian public. The Publishers have therefore, arranged with the author for a Canadian edition.

Whatever conclusion the reader may arrive at as to the matter of these essays, the bold handling and vigorous style of the author cannot fail to arrest attention and stimulate thought on these important subjects.

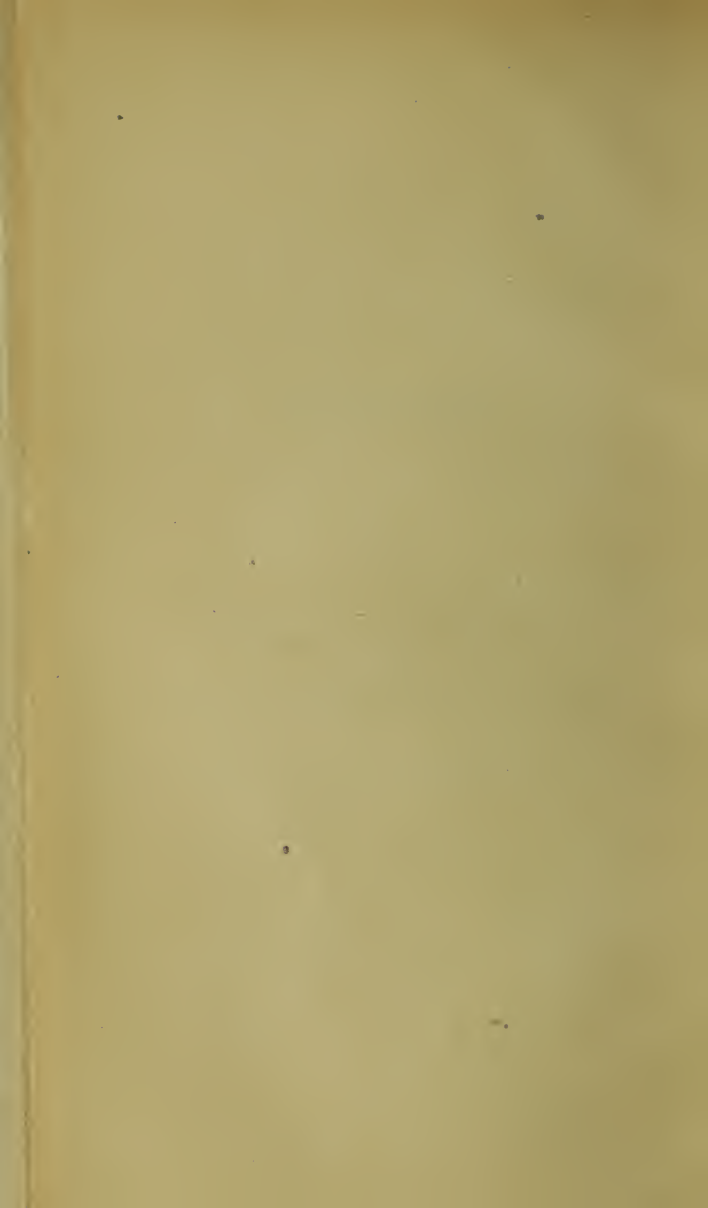




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# IMPERIAL FEDERALISM

(CONTEMPORARY REVIEW, January, 1871.)



THIS is the period of Drift. Swept along by wind and current, our political and social tendencies appear to be escaping from our governance and to be manœuvred by fate. It needs no deep mind to discover it. Capping leaded leaders in our daily papers, or suggesting to the "artists" of some of the many vulgar *comics*—O sad misnomer!—a subject of grotesque satire, the idea of Drifting is clearly recognised as a thing of the age. Drifting into war, drifting into a conference, drifting into danger, drifting into Church and State controversy, drifting to imperial dissolution—the term is now a favourite one to apply to our political movement—the tendency even seems to be favourably acquiesced in.

DRIFTING TO IMPERIAL DISSOLUTION: I wish before heaven that I could lay hold and arrest the movement with a good, strong Samson's or Cromwell's hand! I cannot; but I have a voice, and I appeal from the politicians to the people of the Empire. Driftwood politicians; sweeping on before the breath

of popularity—with no stern, proud principles to rule their motions—both parties of them eddying round and round here in a Reform whirlwind, tossed out of the way there by an Irish gust, spun about again by a German-French tempest, inanely watching the play of a Russian nor'-easter—and *liking it!* seeming contented with that lot, absolutely looking for the winds and currents as god-sends to be yielded to—glad if they blow hard enough to make it clear that it is the way they must go. I pray you, any sensible bystander, any interested Briton, whose own and his children's fate is in the boat with these helmsmen; and even you, O captain and mates! do you call this statesmanship or farce?

Ought not these men to announce boldly in the face of us all: "This and this is our design—this is our best gospel in such and such a matter: there is the point we mean to try to reach, blow wind or run tide ever so strongly against us: if you don't approve of our intentions, they are honourable, and in all honesty don't expect *us* to carry out any other. Here we resign to any man who has another plan, if you think it a better one. *Our* scheme is true, we believe, and will hold on to be true though the very foundations of the world were discovered; and till we can preach it fairly into your convictions, we shall cease to be responsible for the steering." If we get not soon some such determined and specific-minded captains, brother citizens, we are lost.

At this moment we are drifting to the disintegration of our Empire. Few believe it. Few have seen the great currents sweeping away off beyond the

horizon, commencing their vast circuits even at the antipodes, but ere long the cyclone will burst upon us, and every one, especially the chief officers, will acknowledge a divine wind, and calmly resign themselves to see the vessel rocked and blown to pieces, saving themselves, no doubt, "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they——" I should like to know where our island of Melita will be, and whether the barbarians are likely to be civil. Meantime, I pray your earnest attention to the matters hereafter to be submitted, too conscious that my voice is weak in contest with the now boisterous elements of Drift, but having faith in my soul that these matters are serious and true.

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The idea of the Unity of the Empire has two aspects, both involved in the term Imperial Federalism. Viewed from the observation-point of a central, organising power, it is imperial; from the local basis of each province or colony, it involves in some degree the notion of federalism. Federalism as an imperial question relates to the union of the different constituents of the empire for imperial purposes: as a local question it has to do with imperial union for the advantage of each constituent.

It will be convenient, therefore, although these

divisions must necessarily have reciprocal relations, to regard distinctly (1) *the Imperial* and (2) *the local aspects of Federalism*.

I define Imperial Federalism to be : The doctrine of a legislative union, in the form of a confederation, of each subordinate self-governing community which is now included within the British Empire. To preserve that empire intact, on the ground that such a policy is not only imperial but dictated by the selfish interest of each constituent ; to combine in some flexible and comprehensive system the great concourse of subordinate states whereof our empire is composed, for the benefit of all ; and lastly, to confirm to every individual member of the Imperial Community those rights and privileges to which he is born—rights and privileges justly inalienable from himself or his children : these three things must be at once the aim and the reason for Imperial Federalism.

The gravity of the questions depending on this doctrine, every day pressing more urgently for solution, must ere long drive it to the front rank of political movement. What shall our Empire be fifty years hence ? What shall become of those sons and daughters gone from our bosom to far-off territories, bearing with them a portion of our strength, our civilization, our freedom, our love of motherland ? Who are to be the legatees of the vastest national estate ever accumulated in one sovereign hand ? Are our colonies destined to be our weakness or our strength—to sap or to solidify our power ? Is it the wisest policy to smooth the way to Imperial dissolution, or our duty and policy together, by every honest



means, by every honourable bond, to perpetuate Imperial integrity? Are the hopes of unborn generations most engaged in the maintenance of an united empire, or the developement of separate nations? Such and a hundred other questions, crop up in the hitherto unexplored regions of the subject designated by me Imperial Federalism.

I say *unexplored*. Federation within the empire is a fact, but Imperial Federalism has, if anything, been but a shadow. The idea, if not new, has never been more than glanced at. Its proportions loomed so wide, so magnificent, enclosed such long and endless wilds of discussion, who can wonder that, until the day of necessity came, men shrank from the exploration? I think the day of necessity has come—the day when we must either boldly expedite this doctrine or drift to Imperial disorganisation.

I have said that federation exists already within the Queen's dominions. In 1856 the proposal to confederate the British North American provinces is stated to have been regarded by Canadian statesmen "as visionary." In 1867 it was adopted throughout those vast provinces and by the Imperial Government. This should convey to those who are prepared to magnify the obstacles to similar consummation of a wider union, the lesson to be moderate in their unbelief, if not indeed to be active in their faith. In the Canadian confederacy—as in the sister Republic—while each province preserves a certain portion of its autonomy, whatever is of common interest to all is entrusted to the action of the central government. The immediate effect in the two Canadas, for ins-

tance, has been to facilitate the settlement of questions which were before sources of angry recrimination. In the province of Quebec a legislature, representing an enormously excessive constituency of Roman Catholics, conceded to the Protestant minority, on a question of education, what probably they would never have yielded to more equally-proportioned forces when Upper and Lower Canada were united under one government. Each legislature, relieved of the more general subjects of legislation and debate, is now vigorously pursuing the policy of developement—extending education, promoting colonization—roads and railways, and encouraging immigration. Here we have before us, within our own realms, not only a precedent but a demonstration.

In the West Indies, Sir Benjamin Pyne has recently been able to induce several islands to unite upon a confederation scheme, which will receive the sanction of the Home Government.

Following these accomplished facts, the principle of Federalism has naturally found its way to Australia, where, as we shall directly see, it has assumed a serious aspect. But the idea has not been allowed to float about and drop its seeds only on the extremities of the empire. From them it has been borne home to ourselves, and has begun to germinate in Ireland. There, though perhaps fostered more by disaffection than the spirit of patriotism, it would yet be the most wanton prejudice to permit its infelicitous associations to distort our judgement of its political promises. It may perhaps hereafter be shown that some of the most urgent reasons for a federation

of the Empire lie at home, and are not wholly to be sought in the necessities or the aspirations of our colonial provinces. In the extremities of our dominion, the yearning of our colonies is for closer union with each other. Shall there be no responsive quickening at the heart?

The time is not distant when the doctrine that colonies were essential to our developement and power was maintained with armies and fleets against all the world. It is curious to have had so recently recalled to our memories, by the "Life of Viscount Palmerston," that within his official experience not a few fine possessions were confirmed to our dominion. If some think it impossible at this day to defend the mode by which those territories were acquired or the principle of territorial aggrandisement at the expense of other nations, we may at least be allowed to recognise the prescient instinct of our predecessors in their policy of colonial extension. They foresaw, or seem to have foreseen, that the day would come when for the teeming masses of Great Britain these colonies would be the happy outlet, when from them we should draw no indifferent proportion of our wealth and strength. Whether they foresaw this or not, has it not been demonstrated? Turn where we will, we find Britain flourishing by the help of her own offspring—toiling, tilling, trading in and from her distant provinces. To every clime have her adventurous sons borne the civilization along with the enterprise of their race. Prairies and deserts have changed their features, and from their rich unnumbered acres has been brought the blessed food for

millions at home. Nor this alone. The thoughtful workman here looks out with hopeful pride to communities of growing wealth and power, whose increasing necessities daily add to the demands for the products of his labour. They provide him with food, they provide him with staples of manufacture, they provide him with work, and they offer him, should he aim at higher things, the safest and most inviting field for his energies. To know that wherever he goes he still retains his English rights, still is safe under English protection, may at any time return and lie down to rest a citizen in his English home—is not this to make him feel the true value of an imperial destiny? Is not this to give courage to the men and women who otherwise would perish here in the hopeless rivalry of wretchedness? Is not this a true, righteous, practical thing to devise and confirm for the good of every living soul within these crowded kingdoms?

What would not Germany give for such another empire as Australia? What energy or money, or political and legislative zeal, or commercial enterprise would she not lavish in establishing and riveting her relations with such a colony? What a strength would she not draw from that young strong son? And we! We play with the Imperial sentiment and air our new Manchester calico ideas, and swear by no god but Mammon, by no prophets but the Utilitarian Economists, and no political economy but that of dead money; so much wanted here, so much to come from there—"supply and demand;" no matter if in the transit from repletion to vacuum it roll over and crush down thousands of human souls!

There is not much doubt that the bonds between what is now incorrectly termed the *mother-country* and our colonies are perilously strained. I say "incorrectly" because, since the accomplishment of American Independence and the vigorous developement of independent life in our colonial communities, English ministries have seen that parental authority, at least, cannot be enforced against our quondam children — well be it if parental affection go not also ! It has of late years been the apparent policy of our Government, whether in Whig or Tory hands, to encourage independence in our greater provinces, especially independence of us in the matter of expense, this being most fatally the prime reason ; a proper thing to encourage if it means a vigorous self-reliant energy and life, but an ignoble and foolish policy if thereby is instigated a factious disavowal of Imperial relations. Yet the clumsy management of two or three Secretaries of State has nearly brought us to the latter point. But to give to each province the maximum of independent action, and yet preserve for it and for the Empire at large the maximum of mutual aid and benefit, is a problem that seems not to have occurred to, far less to have been attempted by, these summary statesmen. This is the exact problem, which I venture to affirm Imperial Federalism alone can solve.

Starting from the basis of the present relations of our colonies to the Empire, accepting their qualified independence as a fact, have we not in their desire to retain their Imperial position and in the association of interests, a powerful lever to assist in raising

a structure of imperial unity and power? But if effort be neglected, if we permit our blind leaders to bring us to the very edge of dissolution, if, with changing circumstances in each colony we have not an administration at home sufficiently wise and flexible to devise appropriate methods of mutual action, if we testify no regard for the ties urged upon us by both nature and policy, if we allow the Empire to drift—as in North or South America one may see a combination raft booming among the cataracts, the raftsmen meanwhile watching from the river-bank careless whether it reach the bottom in one or many pieces—our indifference will suddenly receive a shock in the decisive action of our dependencies. Therefore, I say, with all diligence let us seek to infuse into our domestic and colonial communities the grand idea of a permanent federated Empire. It behoves us soon to recognise all the independence of our colonies, while they and we recognise our dependence on each other.

In considering Federalism from the Imperial point of view, we shall the better apprehend the true gravity of the question when we come to examine the perilous condition of the existing relations between Great Britain and the colonial provinces. Not to exaggerate the danger, we are justified in observing that the doctrine of colonial independence has been so rudely pressed upon the colonies as to incline some of them to adopt it in its integrity. Canada, during last year, was thrown into a state of excitement by the prospect of a “Fenian invasion,” that is to say, a rotten-raid of senseless cut-throats. Who were these people? Were they immediate enemies of the Cana-



dians, or was their fell purpose excited by hatred for a British Government far away?—This was the unhappy time chosen for the affirmance of the new “Imperial policy!” Not only so; but the Foreign Office intervenes at the wrong moment, and thanks the American Government for a tardy recognition of the fact that a filibuster expedition had been fitted out under its own eyes and with too criminal a delay of protest on the part of American statesmen. I cannot refrain from quoting the rough but truthful description of Canadian opinion on this matter by a correspondent of the *New York Herald*:—

“Close on the heels of the agitation” (consequent on the announcement of the Imperial policy which I shall hereafter quote) “came the Fenian fiasco, the repulse of the marauders by the volunteers, and the general expression of satisfaction on the part of England at the manner in which America had fulfilled her obligations as a neutral or rather a friendly power. This was the last feather. At once Canadians began to perceive the full force of the logic so frequently presented to them in the *New York Herald*. [This is the cruelest cut of all! To have succeeded in driving our colonists to adopt the *logic of the New York Herald*!] Here were Canadians called upon to fight and pay for a quarrel proper to the mother-country. Canadians who have for half a century clung like bull-calves to the teats of the said mother-country. That was the effect of British connection. But that the States should be specially thanked for their services, when these same States had encouraged Fenianism, and were responsible for the whole thing, this was, in the words of Artemus Ward, ‘a darned sight too much.’ A general howl went up all over the country. Every newspaper cursed the truckling, cringing Cabinet of St. James’s, bewailed the evils and expense of having to do their own police, and declared that England would have to put things right, or else—or else what?—annexation.”

It is difficult to pin down the noble lord, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, to any specific act or expression which can convict him of revolutionary intentions; but, unquestionably, the Cana-

dians were led to suspect that the policy of the Home Government was to *wean* the youngling Dominion, and encourage it to look forward to absolute independence. That this suspicion was not groundless seems to have been shown by the circumstances attending the offer of a knighthood and order to Mr. Galt, the late finance minister of Canada. On the 22nd of February last, in the Canadian Parliament, Sir Alexander Galt explained how he, who was an advocate of a policy, "framed with reference to that which appeared to him to be inevitable, the separation of the Dominion from Great Britain," had come to accept an honour from the Imperial Government. When he had received the offer, he stated his views to the Governor, then Sir John Young, and was asked to put them in writing. They were in favour of independence.

"He (Sir Alexander) said, that holding these views, and reserving to himself the right to state them in public, he felt that he must not accept the distinction that was offered to him unless his Excellency would be allowed to convey his (Sir Alexander Galt's) opinion to her Majesty's Government, and that if he learned that her Majesty's Government would be pleased to confer the honour, he would be extremely grateful for it, and would accept it; but that if, on the other hand, they felt that there was anything in the views he entertained which ought to forbid its being conferred, he would accept the decision and acquiesce in the propriety of it. He was not at liberty to give the words of the answer, but they could judge from the facts that the decision was confirmative, and therefore if there was anything in his position which was offensive to the loyalty of the honourable gentleman, all he could say was simply this—that he stood on the same ground as the Ministers of the Crown in England!"

The Colonial Secretary in the House of Lords and Mr. Monsell in the House of Commons were after-



wards forced to explain away the effect of this awkward declaration; but it was impossible to deny that Lord Granville's communication had been of an equivocal character. Accordingly, we need not be surprised to find that some Canadian statesmen are disposed to prepare the Dominion by active measures for the fate apparently contemplated for it by our Government. The Hon. Mr. Huntingdon, Sir A. T. Galt—the ablest statesman, perhaps, in all our colonies—the Hon. John Young, an influential Montreal merchant, and other gentlemen, have publicly supported the doctrine of independence. It is rather significant that some of these gentlemen have in time past been propounders of annexation with the United States, a result certain to follow upon the attainment of independence. An elaborate paper, contributed to the *New York Herald* of July 6th, and admitted by Canadian papers to be partly based on fact, contains some singular disclosures. Questionable as is the authority, the allegations are so specific and important as to demand attention. According to this statement, an independence party have for some years been organizing treason in Canada. This party consisted of two wings"—to use the Yankee figure derived from the sacred bird of their nationality—the American wing and the Canadian wing, the former for propelling the body politic into the toils of the United States, the other flapping to keep it in its Canadian nest. The latter are said to have "believed independence with a British alliance desirable and possible, and (to have) advocated it *as a safeguard against annexation.*"

"The American wing," adds this authority, "who only advocated independence as a step towards annexation, had organs in the *Star* and *Pays*, and exercised no little influence. They were in correspondence with leading American statesmen, endeavouring to mould the policy of the States towards Canada, while they kept the loyal (independence) wing in communication with the English anti-colonials so as to further the work of severing British connection."

Who are the "English anti-colonials?" Is it possible that much of the perilous manœuvring of the Cabinet on colonial questions was due to such tricksters—nay, are there any of them in the Colonial Office? This office seems to me, more than any department of State, to need a visit from a strong reformer with a good broom. Two or three times does the writer reiterate the allegations about co-conspirators in England. For instance:—

"On the day that Mr. Huntingdon and Mr. Young held their Waterloo meeting, *assurances were received from their friends in England that the Gladstone Cabinet could be depended upon to carry out the policy of independence.*"

Again:—

"In the Fall of 1869 very positive assurances were forwarded to Canada *by friends who could speak semi-officially* that the English administration had resolved on the following programme with regard to Canada:—1. The withdrawal of the Imperial forces. 2. The cessation of the system of Imperial guarantee. 3. The declaration of the independence of Canada at the earliest possible moment."

No one who has watched the details of our recent intercourse with the Dominion will be disposed to think the above statements improbable. I deem it my duty to insert them here that they may be distinctly contradicted if untrue. This looks like Drift again, only with a hope that Drift will be in a certain

direction. We are exposed to the possibility of waking up unexpectedly to find our Empire slipped away in a night; cut loose by our statesmen. No indifferent reason for an immediate decision of the public upon the nature of our future policy.

The New Zealand case is too fresh in every one's mind to require that I should do more than refer to it. It proved by one example how delicate were the relations between ourselves and the whole of the Pacific colonies. At a time when the Northern Island was threatened with a general native war, Lord Granville mercilessly consummated the Imperial military policy. The Government of the colony were at their wits' end. We who had encouraged the emigration of our sons to New Zealand under the protection of our flag, who had from time to time made ourselves to a great extent responsible for the action of its Government towards the natives, denied to the inhabitants even the moral support of our soldiery, and left them to cope unaided with enemies strictly more ours than theirs. Not only this. *We withdrew from the natives that protection from vindictive extermination which enraged colonists are too apt to consider necessary to their self-protection.* The colony raised its own forces and repressed the insurrection, but it bitterly resented the cold inflexibility of the English Cabinet, not less than Lord Granville's recommendation to acknowledge within the Queen's dominions the sovereignty of a Maori chief! Some of the first men of the colony began to look, as its only hope, to junction with the United States, who were certain to supply necessary forces to defend any

member of their confederacy. The Imperial Government was successfully threatened with the alternative of help or secession. Under the fear and pressure of public opinion at home, Lord Granville yielded only at the latest hour before the fatal telegram was to have been sent to the New Zealand Government.

Within the last month significant news has reached this country from Australia. During the last session of the Victoria Parliament Mr. Duffy moved for a committee, which was appointed and transformed into a Royal Commission, to consider the possibility of a confederation of the Australian colonies. I take the report of the result, with some observations from the letter of the *Times*' correspondent at Melbourne, dated October 16, and published in the *Times* on December 1 :—

“ ‘ On the primary question of the necessity of a Federal Union,’ say the Commissioners, ‘ apart from all considerations of the time and method of bringing such a union about, there was a unanimity of opinion.’ But touching the relations of our colony with England in time of war, the Commissioners were divided in opinion. The majority, however, concurred in the following views. They say :—

“ ‘ The British colonies, from which British troops have been withdrawn, present the unprecedented phenomenon of responsibility without either any corresponding authority or any corresponding protection. They are as liable to all the hazards of war as the United Kingdom ; but they can influence the commencement or continuance of war no more than they can control the movements of the solar system, and they have no certain assurance of that aid against an enemy at war with the United Kingdom upon which integral portions of the Empire can confidently reckon. This is a relation so wanting in mutuality that it cannot be safely regarded as permanent, and it becomes necessary to consider how it may become so modified as to afford a greater security for permanence.’

“ The Commissioners propose to meet this difficulty by consti-

tuting, under the sanction of the Imperial Parliament, the Australian colonies *quasi*-sovereign States, subject to her Majesty, with power to make treaties with each other and with other States, and with power to concur in or stand aloof from England's quarrels, as may to the Colonies seem wise and expedient. They cite Vattel, who says :—

“ ‘ Two Sovereign States may be subject to the same prince without any dependence on each other, and each may retain its rights as a free and Sovereign State. The King of Prussia is sovereign Prince of Neufchatel, in Switzerland, without the principality being in any manner united to his other dominions.’ ”

“ The former relations of Hanover and of the Ionian Islands with Great Britain are also relied on for the same purpose, and the Commissioners proceed to remark as follows :—

“ ‘ Without overlooking the distinction between colonies consisting of men of the same origin as the population of the United Kingdom, and States inherited by the Crown, like Hanover, or obtained by treaty, like the Ionian Islands, it is suggested for consideration whether the rule of international law under which they are declared neutrals in war would not become applicable to colonies enjoying self-government by a single modification of the colonial constitution.’ ”

“ For the purpose of making good the pretensions of the Australians to this position, the Commissioners call attention to the following facts :—

“ ‘ That the colony possesses a separate Parliament, Government, and flag, a separate navy and militia ; that all public appointments without exception are made by the local Government ; that the only officer commissioned from England who exercises authority within its limits is the Queen's Representative, and that in Hanover and the Ionian Islands, while they were confessedly Sovereign States, the Queen's Representative was appointed in the same manner.’ ”

“ The large population of the Australian colonies, together with their extensive territory, and ‘ a revenue greater than the revenue of six of the kingdoms of Europe,’ are also thrown in to show that we possess the proportions, although not invested with the rank of a Sovereign Power.”

No stronger hint could be given to us at home to arrive at a rapid decision upon our future Imperial policy. When the disintegration of our Empire is recommended by a Royal Commission, it is time to consider whether her Majesty is to be Queen only of

Great Britain or an Imperial sovereign. The proposal of the Victoria statesmen is unpractical. Such a relation of independent "sovereignities" could not be maintained in this age, and we have seen even in democratic America how the attempt to assert state sovereignty against confederated power was stifled in blood. The Australians will look to one or other of the great leading powers of the Anglo-Saxon race; and a continuance of our repulsive policy will drive them, not to independence, but to the United States. The quaint warning of an American diplomatist to a political friend of mine is not so exaggerated as might be supposed: "*The United States is watching, and I guess she'll pick up everything you let drop.*" Not another nation under heaven is so suicidally regardless of the pillars of its power.

Before such schemes are further elaborated, may not we and the Australian colonies judiciously consider what claims the Imperial Government, representing the British nation, has upon those provinces? Colonial ministers acting under the Crown have from time to time constituted small patches of society, excised from our own community, the absolute owners of property held, in all moral and political honesty, in trust for the people and Government of these islands; for it was won and maintained by our adventure and sacrifice. A slip of an imperial pen has unreservedly transferred whole provinces to those casual communities; but this has been done with the implied trust that they should be held and used only in harmony with Imperial interests. No minister or government had the power to confer more. These



territories, from which we might have drawn Imperial revenues, are now administered solely in the interest of the settlers. We exact from them no direct pecuniary profit. They have been the gift by which we meant to reward the enterprise of our adventurous sons. But they must not suppose that they have the right to divest them of the Imperial *dominium*. They hold them as our fellow-citizens, on the basis of their citizenship, and against the Imperial will they cannot assume the right of removing them from our sovereignty. Every man, woman, and child in these islands has a right and voice in the future position of our colonies; "the sooner they and we understand it the better for all. The "unwashed" millions may claim their interest in the matter, and insist that careless statesmanship and intemperate politics shall not jeopardize the enormous stake they have in the integrity of our dominions.

If anybody should represent that in permitting our colonies to separate from us we and they should be fulfilling our destiny, my retort is that destiny appears very much to be under the control of men: within certain limits our destiny is what we make it. If this sort of argument is to prevail, then allow Ireland to drift upon the current of destiny—withdraw your troops, abolish your police, and invite the Irish people to adopt their fate! Surely the principle that is good for one is good for the other of our provinces. If it is worth while to legislate and administer, to concede and conciliate, in order to secure the permanent adhesion of Ireland, why may it not be, within certain limits, an equally proper and worthy aim of states-

manship to cement in more enduring accord the colonies and Great Britain? With what propriety shall we attribute to destiny the natural results of our indifference?

I. I now propose to consider the advantages to be acquired or perpetuated by the Federalisation of the Imperial provinces.

An argument often used in favour of disintegration is that our colonies would be a source of weakness in time of war. That argument, if based on fact, would be far from conclusive, since, pushed to its limit, it would almost proscribe the possession of any national territory. That it is easy to attack any single colony is transparent, but what cogency, there may be in urging this as a reason for deserting it is invisible. Should we be at war with a great Power, it is conceivable that one of our colonies—Canada, for instance—might for a time be at its mercy. Looking simply at the question whether Canada was worth the blood and sacrifice its defence would cost, it might be admitted for argument's sake that in itself it was not; but regarding the terrible crucial question, whether an empire is worth maintaining in its integrity or not, the matter bears another aspect. Regarded thus, Canada becomes as dear, as necessary as Ireland, or the Isle of Man, or the Isle of Wight. For let us reverse the glass, and look from the enemies' side. I have been informed that an American officer of high reputation has, in reporting to his Government concerning the relative forces of England and the United States in the event of a war, put down our colonies as worth to us at least a million of men. And



probably with reason. For, if our colonies should be hard to defend, they are equally hard to attack. Their extent and number would require successive armies to conquer and hold them, even if in themselves they could supply but an indifferent defensive force. No state could hope to do more than damage the extremities of our empire by occasional incursions or temporary occupation—to hold all or any of them permanently against a determined people were an impossibility. There is also a robust power in the colonies themselves. Sir John Rose, in the admirable letters of “A Colonist” to the *Times* in February last, says :—

“ The population of Canada comprehends nearly as many fighting men as the Southern States ever brought into the field. She has 40,000 of an active militia, well trained, armed, and in case of need it is computed that she could supply at least 300,000 men capable of bearing arms, leaving still a reasonable proportion of her population for the indispensable work of life.”

Australia and New Zealand could do at least as much as Canada.

An enemy engaged in widespread efforts to cripple our colonial empire would find that the greater the extent of it, the greater our defensive strength, since he must necessarily weaken himself in proportion to the magnitude and variety of his operations. The question from the Imperial point of view would appear to be, not how shall we lessen the number of points in which we may be attacked, but how shall we strengthen and establish a loyal union of all our forces? Though a single colony might suffer much in a war, our effort should be to prove that the suffering would be more than balanced by the advantages

of Imperial connection. On the face of things, a world-wide confederation, which has not only navies but territories in every part of the earth, is not likely to be the subject of wanton attack by other Powers. The infusion of the Imperial spirit into every member of the Empire, the federation of these members upon an equitable basis of common interests, would tend more surely than disintegration to establish enduring peace and prosperity. From the Imperial point of view, therefore, I take it that in a military estimation the united spirit and action of every portion of our Empire would add triple strength to our power.

How much we have to gain in time of peace by the consolidation of Imperial connections it is needless here at any length to recall. The arguments used in support of emigration—the proofs adduced of mutual profit from intercourse and trade are only strengthened when we consider their bearing under a more organized and complete union. Should a federal system be devised, whereby every colony had its rightful place and representation in the Imperial connection, whereby to every colonist was assured Imperial citizenship, with all its resultant rights of protection and freedom, it is impossible but that the ideal distinctions between “home” and “the colonies” would vanish away. Instead of hearing ignorant men among the uninstructed classes, and unwise men among the instructed classes, speak of an emigrant as “an exile,” and our birthright estates beyond the seas as “foreign lands,” we should know no difference between England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and Australia,

except the divisions of space, and no boundary of "home" other than the limits of our Empire. I cannot think that the establishment of that fact would be of indifferent consequence, when I see how powerfully the opposite idea restricts the movements of emigration even at this time.

The effects upon our trade of a Federated Imperial system are not to be foreshewn with any statistical accuracy, but that they would be important is evident on the surface. As in each of the colonies which united to form the Dominion of Canada it was necessary to introduce modifications of the customs and excise, and to make an uniform tariff, a similar effect would ensue upon the practical adoption of the federal system throughout the Empire. Instead of each colony, as at present, raising its revenues by imposing restrictions on the manufactures of other parts of the empire, these restrictions would be removed, and FREE-TRADE would be established as between the Imperial constituents. If we preach this as a boon to all nations, we should preach it as a boon to ourselves. How the apparent immediate loss to any colony thus deprived of a source of revenue might be balanced may be judged in the case of Canada, which has been forced by the policy of our government to raise her militia estimates from £80,000 sterling, in 1857, to £400,000 sterling in 1867, the whole of which expense would in a Federation fall on the Imperial fund, and, subject to the consideration that the colony would contribute something to that fund, relieve the colonial Government from the necessity of imposing on English manufactures a hostile duty. How further it

would be balanced may be demonstrated by aggregating all the arguments in favour of free-trade generally, all that proves how vastly every industry benefits by the removal of tax restrictions. Moreover, much that a colonial government has to do, because the colony is *quasi*-independent, would be taken off its hands under an Imperial federation : while local revenue would be drawn by direct taxation from the locality it was immediately to benefit, and not, as now, be principally excised by tariff from the profits of other portions of the Empire.

We are, therefore, justified at first glance in expecting by honest inquiry to be able to demonstrate that an immense impetus would be given to commutual trade by the removal, consequent on federation, of hostile tariffs. Nor is this all. The timidity of wealth, as well as that of thinking labour and personality, to which I have already alluded, partly arises from the uncertainty of our relations to our colonies, which along with considerable ignorance regarding the colonies themselves, makes the capitalist hesitate to trust his money in colonial enterprises. If Canada is likely to become independent, if New Zealand is any day to go off in a pet, who can foresee what the value of their securities, or their railways, or their public works or private speculations will be ? But confirmed in federal union, with ultimate resort to federal courts, with more constant intercourse and a permanent official representation at the Imperial capital—with the whole system of our English business expanded, its banks, trades, companies, agencies, communicating and acting together within the Empire as

they now do within Great Britain—we foresee in Federalism a promise of developement for our wealth hitherto unconceived by the most dreamy worshipper of Plutus. And the possibility has been concluded by the steam and telegraph, which have destroyed the obstacles of distance. The colonies also would gain their advantage from the new relation, in the ready inflow of capital for all purposes of developement.

Not only in this way would the wealth of the Empire be quickened into more general circulation, but from the Imperial point of view Federalism promises to settle in the happiest way the difficulties arising through the unequal incidence of the burthens of Imperial Expense. I do not here advert to the National Debt, a subject which would need special arrangements under any system of federation. One of the prime conditions of federation would be that the charges in matters of common interest should be equally borne, those of more immediate concern to any member of the confederacy being left to the adjudication of its local government. Under this arrangement Englishmen in England could no longer complain that they were unfairly taxed for the benefit of Englishmen in America, or Africa, or Australia ; for even granting that at any period any single member of the confederacy should need peculiar assistance, its constant contribution to the Imperial exchequer would in the end more than outweigh the temporary obligation.

Again. In promoting general efficiency of legislation the doctrine of Federalism promises extraordinary results.

Granted the inexpediency of dissolving the Empire, not the least forcible of the arguments in favour of Federalism, is the yearly aggravated plethora of business at Westminster. Crowding about the doors, filling the lobbies, blocking up the committee-rooms are questions affecting nations side by side with the rights of greasy corporations, or speculating companies, or private individuals. The Premier or some other minister may be called on to show cause for his fatuous neglect of the Temperance question in a Queen's Speech—to explain why it was necessary to reduce the number of quill pens issued to civil servants, or why the Government was so criminally neglectful as to have permitted a silly magistrate to say that he disagreed with the Queen on a point of patriotism. Even less gravely are they liable to be worried by the numberless legislative flies, whose only policy is to buzz loud enough for their constituents to hear them. Measures of Imperial, national, or colonial importance are hustled out of the way by one or two, sometimes of secondary consequence, which have happened to engage popular sympathies. Here is the secret of ministerial worship of Drift. Some of the most crying evils of the day retain their vicious power, some of the most needful reforms are unaccomplished, because there are limits to legislative time and human endurance. If this pressure continues in anything like the present ratio of increase the Empire must perish of congestion of the brain.

A review of the legislation of last session will illustrate with striking clearness the incapacity of our present legislative powers, and the waste even of



those limited powers upon matters of subordinate interest.

Disregarding for a time the vast amount of nugatory speechification and technical discussion, I will analyze the legislation that was accomplished. During the session there were passed of—

Acts technically denominated " Public and General "	112
"                  "      " Local and Personal "	177
"                  "      " Private " . . . . .	4
	<hr/>
Total . . . . .	293

The latter Acts, passed with all formality by an Imperial legislature, were for the following purposes :—

1. Enabling the Rector of St. Luke's, Chelsea, to grant leases.

2. Extension of Owen's College, Manchester.

3. To enable Lord Cornwallis's trustees to develop estates at Hastings.

4. Respecting the Downie Park Estate, Forfarshire.

At first blush, therefore, 181:112 is the proportion of Acts of limited importance. Assigning these Acts to their proper kingdoms I find that of them there were :—

Relating to boroughs, railways, corporations, gas and water supplies, and personal matters, etc., etc., in England . . .	140
"                  "                  "                  Scotland . . .	19
"                  "                  "                  Ireland . . .	19
The rest, relating to coast-fisheries and ocean-telegraphs may perhaps fairly be considered of an Imperial character . . .	3
	<hr/>

Among these Imperial Acts you find such as No. xviii., "for better supplying with water the town and parish of Beccles in Suffolk," a cleanly and godly thing in itself for the said town and parish, and conducive to the health of its rustic inhabitants, but to perform which it is sheer waste to concentrate the huge enacting forces of an Empire. As appropriately might we send the British army or a Royal Commission, well provided with Imperial soap, brushes, towels, and water-basins to scrub the Becclesian townsfolk.

Before we leave these subordinate enactments it is worth while to observe the discrepancy between the numbers arising out of the three kingdoms. The proportion of English statutes is too largely in excess of those from Scotland and Ireland to be accounted for simply by the disproportion of population, wealth and prosperity. It must be taken that from either of the lesser provinces there would, in the event of greater legislative facilities, be more legislation, and the activity of legislation is a better sign for a country than its inertness. Conversely I assume that the deficiency of legislation of the kind here under discussion, for two countries like Scotland and Ireland, is, in part, fairly attributable to a deficiency of facilities for accomplishing it.

Those Acts of a quasi-imperial character termed "Public and General Statutes," yield the following results, allowing to the description Imperial the widest scope :—



Imperial statutes, <i>e.g.</i> , Army, Navy, Revenue, etc., etc.	45
Technical statutes—amending laws or affecting legal questions, etc., (these might be either local or Imperial).	15
Local statutes :—England . . . . .	26
“ Ireland . . . . .	16
“ Scotland . . . . .	7
“ India . . . . .	2
“ England and Ireland . . . . .	1
	— 52
Total . . . . .	112

Hence, had there existed an Imperial Parliament and separate local Governments in England, Scotland, and Ireland, less than one half of the Public General Statutes would have come within the province of Imperial legislation—that is, 45 out of 97.

The result upon the whole legislation is, that out of 293 Acts there were—

Imperial. . . . .	48
Technical . . . . .	15
English . . . . .	166
Irish . . . . .	35
Scotch . . . . .	26
Indian . . . . .	2
England and Ireland together . . . . .	1
	—
Total . . . . .	293

Less than *one-sixth* in number of all the Acts of last session could be characterized as Imperial; the rest were properly referable to the localities immediately affected by them. One of them, on a matter properly belonging to local legislation, occupied a large proportion of Imperial time. Were there space, I should pursue the inquiry further, with an analysis of the subjects discussed in the two Houses of Parliament during the last session, but any one accustomed to

read the reports of debates in the newspapers will be prepared to believe how great a discrepancy exists in abortive legislation between Imperial and local subjects, and that a vast amount of time is wasted over questions too subordinate or too purely local to be properly entertained by the Parliament for an empire. It is a sorry sight to see a Chancellor of the Exchequer haggling about the ground for law courts intended only for that corner of the British empire called England.

But to me the notable thing is not alone how much is done that ought not to be done, but how much, in consequence of the plethora of matter to be investigated, discussed, and acted upon, is left undone that ought to be done. This is the most serious point of the whole subject. Year after year, at the close of the session, there are plunged into the Dead Sea of impossibility many inchoate Acts of extreme usefulness and even of pressing importance. This transaction is facetiously termed by a relieved public and legislature the "Slaughter," or "Massacre of the Innocents"—a joke with a sad side when we look upon the hopes, the promises of good that are often buried in their grave. A weary cabinet minister sees himself forced by sheer exhaustion to drop measure after measure of necessary remedy—to give for another or another year a further lease to some vested absurdity or wrong. Every one thinks the Poor Law requires revision, but who will be the Hercules? The ratepayers of the metropolis are crying out from year to year for a reform of its government, but Bumbledom can beat the breath out of a half-dead ministry, carry-

ing on its back an Irish Church or Land Bill. If we had a local legislature for England, such questions would be settled in a year. If we had such local Parliaments, who can doubt that education would have followed the first instead of the second Reform Bill?

II. When we regard Federalism in its local aspects, not only are many material interests of the colonies, as we have partly seen, involved in it, but it promises to remove the difficulties so frequently arising out of the Imperial connection in its present form.

It has been alleged that the colonies are not properly represented in the Imperial Government. Last year a wild and abortive attempt was made towards a redress of this grievance, and late suggestions from able pens are proof that it is considered to be a subject of practical inquiry. That it is a grievance no one intimate with colonial wants and circumstances can fail to see. An office, presided over by a shifting partizan, however able, however honest, however industrious—actually conducted by a permanent staff, seldom, if ever, selected for any reputation of experience in colonial life—an office, to visit which is for a colonist like reconnoitring an enemy—to negotiate with which is like a war parley, and to assault which needs almost a forlorn hope and a battery—is, spite of any brilliant abilities existing in it, incapable of discharging with success the infinitely varied, numerous, delicate, and detailed duties essential to its business. To every colony, each with its own wrongs or rights or difficulties, such an office is sure to appear unwise or tyrannical, because, in its very

constitution, its aspect is to them *foreign*. Their delegates do not meet officials from their own colony—they meet bigoted domestic Englishmen. Not infrequently, before they can open a negotiation, or even make a statement, they are obliged to give imperfect instruction in the conditions of the people or places to be the subject of official attention. This cannot continue long. The colonies must have better audience at Whitehall, or they will have done knocking at our doors. They may serve us with a notice that they will no longer preserve even a calling acquaintance because our *gentlemen* are so insolent.

To destroy this anomaly would naturally be the first result, as it would be one of the essential aims, of Federalism. A senate or parliament of representatives from every province, deliberating in public, and acting on the decision of the majority, would of necessity satisfy all the objections to the present system. All other schemes, such as that of a representative colonial council, colonist ministers, limited representation in the Imperial Parliament, and so forth, dwindle before the practical simplicity of federal union. That alone would relieve the new Parliament of more than it imposed upon it. Believing that the time has come when the colonies may fairly claim some such representation in London, I propound this as the simplest and best way of satisfying their requirements.

One cannot here more than sketch in outline how important an effect the opening to British colonists of a great field of Imperial ambition would have on each provincial community in inciting to enterprise,

quickenings education, awakening talent ; or, conversely, how great an access of ability would be made to Imperial councils by sifting every part of the empire to minister to their force. Some of our ablest statesmen were schooled in the colonies, and there are abler men behind them. Very scanty Imperial honours are now open to colonists, unless, indeed, they make the desperate venture of permanently forsaking their homes and associations, and battling for fame in the over-crowded arena of Great Britain. The colonial field is not sufficiently extensive ; the ambition of a colonial soldier, or statesman, or minister of religion, or barrister, or physician,—of any professional or commercial man, is restricted. Honoured at the extremity of the Empire, when he arrives at London he finds himself unknown, and drops into the pool of mediocrity. On the other hand, what is there to attract a man of any ambition into the military service of a place like New Zealand, if he knows that his utmost attainments are bounded by the limits of the colony ; and that, in case of a general war, he will be looked upon as inferior to the Imperial soldiery ? Similarly, by the severance of the Imperial connection, the chances of attaining to Imperial distinctions in art, science, law, medicine, or society, would be reduced to insignificance. It has been argued by some colonists that, on attaining their independence, fields of honour would be opened to their sons in the diplomatic and military services, as well as the official honours of their own Government. But in an Imperial federation, higher and more numerous honours would be possible to every

colonist, while the concentration into one federal hand of diplomatic and military management would save each province from a considerable burthen in the maintenance of an independent nationality.

I have left to the last, because it is a local and subordinate object, though very important, and in some quarters put forward as a main argument for Federalism — the consideration of the part which Ireland has in this great question. Latterly, at least, she cannot justly complain of Imperial inattention, though it is not so clear that she can be grateful for the Imperial estimate of her requirements. One of the questions which recently convulsed the empire, I mean the land question, was properly local, and its final settlement might even now be facilitated by leaving it to an Irish House of Commons. There is no denying that at present Ireland is governed by superior force, moral and physical, from without herself, and such a relation must be, nay ought to be, a source of discontent. The contingent which she contributes to the Imperial legislature is so overpowered by the other representatives as to divest of anything except pretence the notion that her people are governed in accordance with their wishes. All that they can do is to chaffer with successive ministries, buying concessions at one time for votes given at another. This is an ignoble position for us, a dastardly position for a high-spirited race like the Irish. It is neither the status of an independent community, nor of a society coherent with our own. Can we wonder that the Irish people are jealous of our sincerest attempts to bless them, and we in-



dignant at their honest attempts to damn us? The most earnest thing we ever did for Ireland, the Irish Church legislation, disquieted the only party in the country that had persistently been loyal to our interests. Is not this a lesson that in such a community it is better to suffer forces to balance themselves, and not by the importation of foreign make-weights to throw them still more thoroughly out of gear? Would it not be policy to let the Irish people manage their domestic affairs for themselves? Would not the re-establishment of a provincial government, with such limited powers as Federalism must necessarily leave them, elected by household suffrage, reconstruct, encourage, awaken, educate the whole of Irish society, which needs all this from top to bottom? The antagonisms of faith, the difficulties of educational or property legislation, the evils of absenteeism (not so much felt in any single State of the American Union because each protects herself), would be compulsorily subdued by the necessity of mutual concession, when no help from without, except the Imperial arm to maintain peace at any cost, could be hoped for by either party. I have already adduced the instance of Lower Canada, where the Protestants obtained from a Roman Catholic minister and a legislature overwhelmed by Roman Catholics a liberal educational measure.

In Ireland I should anticipate similar results from federalization. The conditions of the establishment of a local government would be different now from those under which the Irish Parliament existed. Society and politics have changed their features.



What is needed to complete the regeneration is to cast upon her people the responsibility of their own future. They would know that their action must be regulated by certain principles of liberty which would be enforced for the benefit of the whole Empire. No possibility of Church and State establishment; no chance for preponderating numbers to injure the rights of Imperial citizens within their province; no power to restrict the enjoyment of the franchise.

It is a significantly hopeful token that the notion of Federalism, though one as I suggest too limited in its scope, has drawn together in Ireland an association of men representing all shades of religious and political opinion. In the prospectus of the "Home Government Association" they have declared:—

"We strongly and emphatically disclaim any desire to promote the ascendancy of any form of religion in Ireland. We declare that efforts made by any party in that direction would have neither sanction nor support from us, but would meet with our most strenuous opposition; and we equally disclaim any desire or purpose of interference with the settlement of property in Ireland. To leave no doubt on this subject, the Association propose that articles affording the fullest possible guarantees on those points shall form a fundamental part of the [Irish] Federal Constitution."

The opinions which instigated or prompt this movement are, in the present inquiry, of little consequence to us, and need not be reviewed. The specific proposals made by Mr. Butt in his pamphlet are not immediately important, because I have attempted to support a wider sweep of Imperial relation, and one involving more splendid consequences than the regulation of the British trinity. Perhaps

some light will be thrown upon the advantages of Federalism to Ireland by the brief examination of the Canadian system with which I shall conclude this paper. It may hereafter be my part to discuss schemes of federation, and in so doing to answer the rather one-sided, though able, reflections of a writer upon the Irish movement in *Fraser's Magazine* for December last.

One local objection certain to be urged against Federalism is that the discrepancies between the laws of the three kingdoms are already too flagrant, and that these diversities the establishment of separate local governments would contribute to increase. But it can be shown that we have good ground to anticipate a precisely opposite result. The simplest answer is that it is easy to provide against such a contingency by the terms of union. This is capable of proof, not only by reference to the United States, where the tendency of general law is to uniformity, but also by the Act of Union for the Dominion of Canada. 30 Vict., chap. iii. section 91, contains the following list of subjects to which the authority of the central government exclusively extends :—

1. The Public Debt and Property.
2. The Regulation of Trade and Commerce.
3. The raising of Money by any Mode or System of Taxation.
4. The borrowing of Money on the Public Credit.
5. Postal Service.
6. The Census and Statistics.
7. Militia, Military and Naval Service, and Defence.
8. The fixing of and providing for the Salaries and Allowances of Civil and other Officers of the Government of Canada.
9. Beacons, Buoys, Lighthouses, and Sable Island.
10. Navigation and Shipping.

11. Quarantine and the Establishment and Maintenance of Marine Hospitals.
12. Sea Coast and Inland Fisheries.
13. Ferries between a Province and a British or Foreign Country or between two Provinces.
14. Currency and Coinage.
15. Banking, Incorporation of Banks, and the Issue of Paper Money.
16. Savings Banks.
17. Weights and Measures.
18. Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes.
19. Interest.
20. Legal Tender.
21. Bankruptcy and Insolvency.
22. Patents of Invention and Discovery.
23. Copyrights.
24. Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians.
25. Naturalization and Aliens.
26. Marriage and Divorce.
27. The Criminal Law, except the Constitution of Courts of Criminal Jurisdiction, but including the Procedure in Criminal matters.
28. The Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Penitentiaries.
29. Such Classes of Subjects as are expressly excepted in the Enumeration of the classes of subjects by this Act assigned exclusively to the Legislatures of the Provinces.

This list is worthy of careful study collaterally with one directly to be cited. Any one conversant with the difficulties arising out of the conflict of laws in the three kingdoms will at once see how considerably such an allotment of subjects would facilitate uniformity between their laws. Bankruptcy and insolvency, marriage and divorce, criminal law—here are subjects of legal differences committed to the legislative control of one body, whose interest and policy it would be to assimilate them. Divested of the mass of business next to be specified, such a body would have more time to devote to a reform so difficult. In section

92 are enumerated the subjects of cognizance by local legislatures :—

1. The Amendment from time to time, notwithstanding anything in this Act, of the Constitution of the Province, except as regards the Office of Lieutenant Governor.
2. *Direct Taxation* within the Province in order to the raising of a Revenue for Provincial Purposes.
3. The borrowing of Money on the sole Credit of the Province.
4. The Establishment and Tenure of Provincial Offices and the Appointment and Payment of Provincial Officers.
5. *The Management and Sale of the Public Lands* belonging to the Province and of the Timber and Wood thereon.
6. The Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Public and Reformatory Prisons in and for the Province.
7. The Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Hospitals, Asylums, Charities, and Eleemosynary Institutions in and for the Province, other than Marine Hospitals.
8. *Municipal Institutions* in the Province.
9. Shop, Saloon, Tavern, Auctioneer, and other Licences in order to the raising of a Revenue for Provincial, Local, or Municipal Purposes.
10. Local Works and Undertakings other than such as are of the following Classes,—
  - a. Lines of Steam or other Ships, Railways, Canals, Telegraphs, and other Works and Undertakings connecting the Province, with any other or others of the Provinces, or extending beyond the limits of the Province.
  - b. Lines of Steam Ships between the Province and any British or Foreign Country :
  - c. Such work as, although wholly situate within the Province, are before or after their Execution declared by the Parliament of Canada to be for the general Advantage of two or more of the Provinces.
11. The Incorporation of Companies with Provincial Objects.
12. The Solemnization of Marriage in the Province.
13. *Property and Civil Rights in the Province.*
14. The Administration of Justice in the Province, including the Constitution, Maintenance, and Organization of Provincial Courts, both of Civil and of Criminal Jurisdiction, and including Procedure in Civil Matters in those Courts
15. The Imposition of Punishment by Fine, Penalty, or Imprisonment for enforcing any Law of the Province made in relation to any Matter coming within any of the Classes of Subjects enumerated in this Section.

16. Generally all Matters of a merely local or private nature in the Province.

What relief would the removal of such an incubus of legislation be to the central government : what scope would it afford to local improvements ! The 94th section provides for legislation by the central legislature, for uniformity of the laws of property and civil rights, but only with the assent of the local assemblies. But the discussion and adoption by the central legislature of a scheme of uniformity would exercise considerable influence upon public opinion in each of the provinces, and pave the way to their concurrence. Lastly, the 93rd section guards the educational liberties of every class and sect.

Nothing need be added to prove that the Federal principle is capable of embodiment in a form at once promoting unity, protecting personal liberty, and fostering local independence, while in enlarging the scope of Imperial splendour it gives strength to the play of Imperial loyalty.

I have sought simply to preach the doctrine of Federalism, not to indicate the method of Federation. Without pretence of exhaustive treatment enough has I hope been said to prove the desirability of inquiring throughout our Empire whether Federation be feasible or impossible. It is likely that I shall be met with the familiar sneer that I have dreamed a magnificent dream. Had Bismarck ten years ago dreamed aloud the actual happenings of these wondrous and terrible days, would he not have been consigned to some careful asylum ?







# AN IMPERIAL CONFEDERATION

(CONTEMPORARY REVIEW, April, 1871.)



THE Briton who spreads before him a map of the world on Mercator's projection, and encloses in one view the magnificent cordon of empire that British might and prowess have drawn about the globe, may begin to realize to himself the true significance of our Imperial destiny to the present and the future.

In the relative situation of its constituent provinces, in the range and variety of their resources, in capacities boundless and almost universal, while he sees much to excite his pride he may find more to nerve his noblest National aspirations. But, most likely, the prominent thought in his mind will be, that this vast stretch of empire represents not alone the energy of a race unrivalled in history, not only physical and moral forces which might perhaps beard the world in arms, but principles of freedom, of justice, and of Christianity, however, and however often marred by invidious accidents, yet, shedding over the whole a surpassing and peculiar lustre

Let us glance at this empire as it extends its huge coils around the earth, starting from that indifferent

group of islands whose people have stamped so sharp and deep an impress on the destinies of mankind. Its superficial area is nearly five millions of square miles, peopled by more than two hundred millions of human beings, nearly a third of the habitable globe, a fourth of all its population. On every continent, in every sea, are the solid evidences of its supremacy. Its people, gifted with rare commercial energy, have built up a trade which makes the world wonder. Thirty-nine thousand registered vessels, their tonnage exceeding seven millions, bear her enormous freights on oceans, on internal seas and rivers. The aggregated exports of the various provinces of this dominion, amount to £320,417,000 sterling, and the imports to £426,220,000—constituting the fabulous trade of nearly seven hundred and fifty millions of pounds per annum; which it may assist us to realise if we make the simple calculation that an impost of one penny in the pound on such a sum would produce a yearly revenue of sixty-two millions and a half. When again we consider how much this represents, what untold wealth in lands and moveable properties lie at the basis of this commercial pyramid, the mind shrinks from the endeavour to appreciate that which is even beyond the range of fancy.

The better to aid in some apprehension of this peerless empire, as well as to a conception of the task set before those who would more firmly hold and knit it together, I propose, in rather rapid detail, to pass in review its several constituents. We will begin as I have said, at its kernel in Europe, these celebrated islands, embracing an area of 120,879 square

miles, a population of 31,000,000, producing a revenue of £71,000,000 per annum ; with a trade, in one year, reaching the sum of £532,470,000 ; with a tonnage of its own outrivalling that of any other naval state. Hence let us, omitting the unimportant post of Heligoland, descend to Gibraltar, which holds for us the key of the great European lake ; to Malta, impreguably maintaining our naval superiority in the midst of the Mediterranean ; to Aden, guarding the entrance and the outlet of the Red Sea ; and so across the Arabian sea, until we arrive at India and Ceylon. Here are realms that were populous and civilized before we began to emerge from the antique chaos of history, the fabled treasury of unbounded riches, won and held by our overmastering arms. Here is an empire in itself, comprising, if we take India and Ceylon together, 1,012,545 square miles of territory, dwelt in by 153,000,000 of people, and these, under our benign sway, improving in civilization, enlarging their capacities of production and absorption, second only to England in trade ; their imports £55,346,000, their exports £57,493,000 per annum. Thence, down the Straits of Malacca, we pass that series of small but important settlements which continue the chain of our trade, and afford eyries of protection for our richest commerce, as it wings eastward and westward to and from China and our Pacific dependencies ; settlements containing 1,095 square miles, and a population of 282,831, yet whose expansive trade yearly reaches the comparatively enormous sum of £16,000,000 sterling. Past Singapore, and facing the China sea, we observe the little region of Sarawak,

the prize of a romantic and adventurous ambition, which, though not recognised as a colony, affords us a foothold on the great Island of Borneo, and a means of tapping its inexhaustible productions; while to the northward the Island of Labuan supplies coal to our naval or commercial marine. On the edge of the great human ocean of China, one of the conduit-pipes of an enormous trade, lies Hongkong—a place, so long as the opium trade continues, to be regarded only with sorrow and shame by any Englishman who is the subject of such fine but feeble sensations. Next we reach a new continent, which could almost (with its splendid accessories of New Zealand and Van Diemen's Land) embrace all Europe—a continent of gold and corn and cattle, of endless varieties of climate and soil, of wonderful productiveness, proffering homes to innumerable millions, fields of enterprise to the vigour or the ambition of many generations. Nobly it spreads out its broad bosom, with its area of 2,582,070 square miles, as yet devoted to only 2,000,000 of people, who export every year £33,256,000 and import £31,566,000. Round Cape Horn we come upon the Falkland Islands, and going northward, find on the round elbow of the South American continent, the splendid colony of British Guiana, 76,000 square miles in extent, whose population of 160,000 sent forth last year 100,000 hogsheads of sugar and 60,000 puncheons of rum. From Belize, or British Honduras, containing 18,500 square miles and 25,600 people, we look out to the Caribbean Sea, over a stretch of 1,500 miles and more, upon a jewelled girdle of islands, smiling in tropical beauty,

and rich with tropical exuberance ; the whole of these West Indian dependencies, including together more than 100,000 square miles, populated by 1,123,000 souls, calling for millions more from east or west to come and gather their lavish wealth, and at present carrying on an annual trade of £13,500,000. Still farther to the north, by Bermuda, another strong naval station, standing as a ward between the golden possessions of the Antilles and the Dominion of the North, we come upon a fourth empire, lying across the broad shoulders of the continent, from Atlantic to Pacific, extending, with many varieties of soil and climate, from the latitude of Rome to the Northern Pole ; the finest agricultural country in the world, traversed by belts of territory unsurpassed for the growth of cereals, wealthy in mines, bordering on a series of interior water-communications incomparably convenient ; a country of bracing climate, of vigorous life, and destined to nurse a hardy race ; a confederation of states, with an area of 630,000 square miles, and an inadequate population of about 4,000,000, who already send out to the world £12,730,000 per annum and receive from it £17,000,000. Its shipping tonnage rivals that of first-rate powers, is greater than that of Prussia, of Austria, of Spain, exceeds the half of that of the whole German empire ; its organised militia number 600,000 men.\* Already our review seems like a magnificent extra-

\* " From the head of Lake Superior, " said the late Hon. D'Arcy McGee, illustrating the extent of his adopted country, " the same craft may coast uninterruptedly, always within sight of our own shores, nearly the distance of a voyage to England—to St. John, Newfoundland."



vaganza, but there are yet more. In the mid-ocean, Ascension and St. Helena; along the west coast of Africa are Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Gambia. And southwards, again, we find another budding empire—a region pointed out, in a recent debate, to be now as large and as populous as the original American federation: 220,000 square miles, the home of 760,000 persons; importing yearly £2,313,000, and exporting £2,592,000. Rich and broad are its lands; neighbouring provinces are ready to confederate with it. It is in the position, had it the power, to hold in either hand the commerce and the naval supremacy of two hemispheres. To complete the marvellous summary, out in the ocean, towards India, lie two islands of productive soil, wealthy to a degree; since, with their small area, and populated by 322,000 people, they send out annually £2,339,000 of their products, and take in £2,200,000, chiefly from ourselves. This is the British Empire, over which—

“..... day by day  
 The sun goes round  
 Where'er yon flag's unfurled,  
 And still through dews of morn  
 Comes back to find Britannia crown'd,  
 And tell her of her world.”—

It were well for those who talk of empire as a thing of naught, who act as if it were not worth the high business of preservation, to sit and ponder over these wide dominions,—to review these accumulated statistics of their extent, their commerce and their power. Then may they ask themselves whether all these empires were aggregated only to be scattered again to the four quarters of heaven: or whether, in

the nature and position of our imperial provinces, their mutual dependency and capabilities of mutual support, their protracted course around the globe, their history and present condition, there is not a significance far other than sentimental, a broadly-written dictate of policy as practical as it is dazzling.

In the January number of this Review \* I considered generally the doctrine of Federation in its relation to the British Empire. It was then my aim chiefly to show how the condition of our dependencies, and the nature of their connection with us, tended to one or other of two conclusions—Federation or disintegration; and I then endeavoured rather to prove that Federalism, or the doctrine of Federation, offered an attractive, and seemingly practical, way to the solution of that difficulty which we are accustomed to enshroud in the vague term of “the colonial question.” While I sought to wake up British statesmen and British people to a sense of sharp and peculiar danger, I wished also to point out to them how that peril might possibly be averted. I desired to prompt inquiry on all hands, not alone amongst ourselves, but amongst the people of our own greater colonies, into the feasibility of Federation. I now propose to pursue the subject somewhat further,—to ascertain, if possible, with greater definiteness something of the outline and scope of that association, which the doctrine of my previous paper was designed to propound. Yet I do not deem it expedient to elaborate any specific scheme of federal union. I shall be

\* Vide Essay on Imperial Federalism.

content to review the general principles upon which that scheme must be framed. Indeed, attempts, such as have recently been made, by able and sincere advocates, to limn out in detail the form of a British Federal system, are, from the conspicuousness of their failure, more likely to injure than to advance their cause. For it is manifestly impossible that any single individual or group of individuals, not actually burdened with the representative responsibility of solving the problem, should know so much of the laws and conditions of the various colonies, should so thoroughly master its details, so well apprehend all the difficulties and the requirements of such an union, as to be able to produce anything but an imperfect scheme. At present it is for the Federalist simply to show his doctrine to be reasonable, his suggestions to be *primâ-facie* practical, his system to be desirable, and to demonstrate that it deserves to be made the subject of united conference and negotiation. When he steps beyond that he opens a field of free-lance controversy on many points of detail which, while affording grounds for attack by ingenious critics, and putting the whole question in peril, may be matters that would never receive the serious discussion of a practical body conferring on the possibility and the method of union.

In discussing Imperial Federalism, great stress was laid upon the delicacy of our relations with some of the colonies. I advanced statements, particularly with respect to Canada, which affected very high officials, and of which I challenged repudiation. No repudiation has been made. It is clear that the policy

of colonial independence, which Lord Granville was endeavouring to quicken into speedier consummation, was afterwards, upon the outcry happily raised in this country by a few earnest men, abandoned, or at least postponed. But we are still exposed to a double danger. Impolitic management by our Colonial Office is the danger that moves from this side; the impatient or resentful independence of the colonists is the danger which moves from that side. It is not difficult to find illustrations of these dangers. The Dominion of Canada affords the best, because by a singular coincidence that colony and Great Britain are, severally and jointly, placed in a position of great delicacy towards the same nation. When the American War broke out, the strong drift of public opinion, both amongst ourselves and the Canadians, settled at first in the direction of the South. We and they were, on the whole, throughout the war at one in our policy toward the United States. Had hostilities resulted from the Mason and Slidell affair, the Canadian people would gladly have joined with us in bearing the brunt of the conflict. The effect, however, of our combined neutral policy was to dissatisfy the Americans, and the depredations of the *Alabama*, built and equipped in England and, if at all involving any criminality, involving it only on the part of the English Government and people, raised a question between the United States and the Empire; a question to which, as the nearest adjacent portion of our dominions, Canada became an immediate party. She had on foot a treaty with the United States, affecting only herself, though nominally in the name of the

Queen ; that treaty was abrogated. Attached to her territory were valuable fishing rights, modified by the treaty, while it lasted ; these were resumed upon its abrogation. Now, although it is unquestionable, that the Imperial Government might legally and constitutionally transfer or abandon the whole of those rights without reference to the colony affected, yet there has gradually grown up between the Colonial and Imperial Government such an understanding respecting the qualified autonomy of the North American colony, that he would be a bold man who attempted so extreme an assertion of Imperial supremacy. We are in Mr. Adderley's third period. We have taught our child to walk without our help or interference. We have asked and encouraged the colony to act in local matters for itself—while her citizens are our citizens, our Queen her Queen, her Government subject in a measure to ours. Consider the delicacy of the position ! Conceive the almost impossible tact and judgement that are requisite to maintain it ! Yet further, appreciate the difficulty that arises out of it in negotiating with our troublesome claimant ! He has at this moment two grievances—one, in a sense, only against us ; the other, in a sense, only against them ; both, in proper constitutional and international reality equally against the Empire of Great Britain. With a little cleverness, he can work the permutations and combinations against one or the other, or both, as he pleases. In this quandary what do our ministers do ? On the one hand they have declared that the colonies must do as much as possible for themselves. That policy seems to point to



the propriety of allowing Canada to negotiate her own treaty with the United States. But, should Canada be unreasonable, the United States will be only too happy to pick a quarrel with *us* ; so that we are driven to take some part and responsibility in the negotiations or to repudiate altogether our connection with Canada. Canada, on her side, may say that she has little interest in the *Alabama* question, save that, if a war arise out of it, she will be the chief sufferer. Yet the English ministry has agreed to refer to the same commission their own difficulty and that of Canada together. Can we be surprised that there is uneasiness in the Dominion—fear lest, to get the one Imperial knot untied, the Canadian noose will be slipped? Should that unhappily take place, it is probable that the dreaded day will have come when the policy of the last twenty years is to bear its fruit. Sir John MacDonald, before departing to take his seat in the High Commission, received a significant hint from the Canadian Parliament that he must not suffer their rights to be trifled with in order to purchase peace for Great Britain.

Another question in which the same parties are involved illustrates the nicety of the situation. We have attached to us a province which we have never had the tact to govern. Its people, fleeing from our mismanagement, have found a home in the United States. There they perpetuate their enmity in a manner peculiar to their adopted society—by quaint organizations, stump speeches, paper armies,—the officers of which, however, are maintained by solid subscriptions,—caucuses, and processions. If they con-

fined themselves to these ludicrous manifestations, the world might marvel, but, so far as it lay beyond the limits of the Republic, would sleep in peace. But these people carry their hostility into open acts against the nearest British possession. By the negligence of their own Government, they are allowed to collect an armed force of ruffians, and march them across the line among peaceable citizens, in no way implicated with their wrongs. Consequently a claim arises on the part of those citizens, which the subordinate Government estimates, verifies, and fixes at £200,000; then it calls upon the Imperial Ministry to vindicate its rights and theirs. This is extremely business-like, but extremely awkward. At the moment the Imperial Government is at its wits' end to answer the offender's own claim against itself. Therefore that of Canada is shelved with deprecations, perhaps imprecations, and promises to present it at some more favourable time. I do not blame the British Ministry. It might have been impolitic in them, pursuing a peace at any price policy, to advance these Fenian claims in the teeth of the exorbitant demands of the United States; but I cannot help seeing that there appears to be some ground for the grumbling of the Canadians. Nor can I do other than conclude that a relation in which such singular, such anomalous difficulties are arising, must be hazardous and uncertain.

That these observations are not those of an imaginative alarmist, is confirmed by a comment made by Sir A. T. Galt on "Imperial Federalism." It (Federation) used to be a favourite idea with me; and,



though undoubtedly presenting many difficulties, I still think it offers the best, I may say the only, chance of holding the British Empire together. But as regards Canada, it is *too late*—our *drift* is too rapid to be arrested.” It is as clear as noon-light, that if we do not arrange for a more complete union, only some singular interposition of Providence can prevent the raising of that crucial question which shall sever Canada from the Empire.

I shall now lay it down as an indisputable proposition, that *Federalism alone, in some form or other, is the principle upon which the constituents of the Empire can be permanently welded together.* The “third period” has matured itself with marked rapidity. Modifications assumed by the colonies, admitted by the Colonial Office—gradual concessions of limited, and at last almost absolute independence—the indefiniteness and suspense of the principles which sway or regulate our present colonial policy—imperfect appreciation of what the colonies ask and require—their own indistinctness of policy and aim—are matters pointing but to one conclusion: separation—by compact or revolution. As if to assist this consummation, it is carefully announced to the colonies, that should any of them evince a desire to be independent, we should not attempt to restrain them. In other words, we invite them to consider, what no colony has proposed or even seriously contemplated,—disruption. When relations stand upon such fickle bases as these, it is no bold thing to proclaim them imbecile. Reconstitution of our relations is the essential condition of establishing their permanence :

and when that is proved, it will be found that no system is possible except Federation. No other constitution for such extended dominions is conceivably permanent. Confederation or Confusion.

This can be very briefly demonstrated. To reconstitute the Empire on the basis of resuming to the Imperial Government as it stands some of the powers impliedly and actually assigned to these colonies, will be granted to be impossible. We cannot recover our abandoned right of interference in local legislation respecting the Crown lands and so forth, nor can we in the present relationship assume the right to levy taxes or raise armies in those colonies without their assent. Suppose then, to meet this, the colonies were asked to send a proportionate or limited number of representatives to the present Imperial Parliament, which regulates not only the affairs of Empire, but the local legislation of these kingdoms. It could not, even with those additions, practically interfere in the local affairs of the colonies. The representation would be delusive and the colonies would refuse to be bound by it. On the other hand, it would be a peculiar anomaly that the Parliament which consisted partly of English peers, partly of British representatives, which regulated home matters, should permit colonial deputies to interpose in those matters while the whole body together regulated Imperial and international affairs. But any other arrangement than the one supposed; or the present, as it is or slightly modified—and this every day is proving to be impracticable;—or some form of Federalism, exhausts the possibilities. My proposition therefore

lies in a nut-shell. We cannot go back; we cannot remain as we are: our only chance of unity is Federation. This I hope to make more evident before I have done.

Since there are those, both amongst ourselves and in the colonies, who profess to regard with indifference the prospect of separation, it were well briefly, before propounding the alternative, to sum up the consequences of that catastrophe. The only colonies which can plausibly be invited to assume independence are those of Canada, Australasia, and South Africa. Not one of these is fairly in a position to assume it.

*First.* From their point of view, what would they gain? Whilst their people were absolved from the responsibilities, they would also lose the benefits of British citizenship. Transform *Civis Britannicus*—yet a strong name, spite of recent diplomacy—into *Civis Canadensis*, &c., how soon on the Continent and over the world would he learn the distinction between the representative of a fifth-rate power and of a great empire! Thrown upon its own resources, the government of the colony would be compelled to frame a diplomatic and consular service of its own—to create a national army and navy at great expense. It would be forced to reverse, in fact, the beneficent operations usually aimed at by Confederacy. At one blow its relations to Great Britain would be cancelled. Separated in nationality, the alliances of trade and of society would be instantly unhinged. Many persons who had cast in their fortunes with a British colony, like the “U E

Loyalists" of the American Independence, would, especially under improved laws of naturalization, refuse to imperil their own and their children's citizenship. They would return upon our already overstocked community. They would be lost to the colony. Nay, that would also lose a large proportion of the influx from ourselves most valuable to them, that of men with large or small capital. Granted that vigorous populations would be willing to frame a system of self-defence, it may be questioned whether any group of these colonies could put itself in a position to maintain its dignity and its rights as a separate state. Imagine Canada discussing alone with her fretful and exorbitant neighbour the Fisheries question, or the free navigation of the St. Lawrence, or the San Juan difficulty. What now restrains the unbridled lust for dominion of such a democracy but the waving of the Imperial flag over the ungarrisoned fortresses of Canada? Therefore, for the aërial remnant of right of self-government which we still withhold from the colony, may I not fairly sum up these as its compensations?—Degradation of national status for every citizen; check upon the influx of capital and population; additional expense in maintaining government; imbecility in war; revolution in its commerce. Moreover, there is ground to believe that the ties which we are told would naturally bind certain groups together might, in a state of independence, be unloosed. New Zealand, for instance, appears to consider that, except within the Imperial circle, her interests are not concurrent with those of Australia. Already she has

effected with American contractors an arrangement for mail and passenger service through the United States, from which she has jealously and deliberately excluded her sister colonies. Diversities which might play without collision in the common fraternity of a British citizenship, might, divested of that, arouse positive antagonisms—nay, might drive some members to community with foreign states. Desert our colonies, assert and perpetuate our recent policy of a complacent watchfulness of national annexations and annihilations, and what is to prevent the acquisition by Germany, or Russia, or the United States, of all the Australian provinces? Could we be so inconsistent as now to chafe against our liability to defend an integral portion of our empire, and should we then be found so Quixotic as to go to war to save a nation no longer within our dominion? Let every colony understand that in giving it up, we shall have consigned it, like another Ishmael, to the tender mercies of the world.

*Secondly.* And what, on the other hand, have we, the people of Great Britain, to gain by casting off these colonies? I confine it to these, because there are colonies like India, Ceylon, and Hong Kong, which British avarice would never consent to abandon; others, like the West Indies, which, I hope, our Christianity would not allow us to consign to what would be an inevitable barbarism. These three groups of colonies are the three in which British vigour has reproduced new British communities, and where climate and soil are peculiarly favourable to their settlement. Those colonies are now the natural, most



promising fields for our enterprise and our population. And these are the colonies that are to be disjointed from the Imperial body ! By permitting them to cut themselves off from British citizenship, we lay an obstruction at once to the current of emigration. Large as has been the exodus to the United States, even of Englishmen, the numbers of those who have gone thither from Great Britain with capital, or on professional and business quests, has been small, compared with the numbers that have swarmed to our colonies. These are the classes whose movement would be especially affected by considerations of citizenship. We must, therefore, expect that our present congestion would be greatly aggravated. Again, we should lose the slight influence we actually exert, and the considerable influence we might indirectly bring to bear on these colonies, in favour of friendly tariffs. The United States has shown how much a people will suffer under a mistaken policy, how much they will sacrifice to build up independent manufactures. If they should adopt free-trade to-morrow, they have established vast industries, which could never have arisen to compete with ours but for the fostering aid of their tariff. Time and experience will no doubt teach the lessons of free-trade ; but they can be more speedily and thoroughly taught when there is community of interest, of race and of citizenship.

*Thirdly.* We should lose both the moral and physical force which our huge extent of empire gives us. While other nations are reforming their fronts, reconstituting their governments, and combining

their constituents into federal unions, we propose to reduce ourselves to an unit ! Stripped of these noble possessions, in which chiefly dwell men of our kindred and language, we should be deprived, in any extremity, of sympathy and support we cannot over-value. It is no small mortification to us to feel even now how distant from us, in the moment of serious extremity, would be the great people who speak the same language and sprang from the same stock. The colonies to be dismissed are the ones best able to assist us. When we speak of colonies as a weakness, we forget that it is those colonies endued with the most strength that will be lopped off. Most of the others we should be forced to retain. The trading stations are essential to our commerce. To our naval supremacy are necessary our fortified naval stations and the coaling depôts. Were it not well to ask ourselves whether these large colonies are not the very backbone of our colonial system, essential to the co-ordination of the whole ? Sever these from the body, and what is left but a sprawling mass of inconsistent fragments ? Reduce the Empire by these, and we may prepare to consider the question of retiring even from our Indian dominions. It would be a very different England then,—the mere torso of an empire,—that proposed, in the face of the world and of the people themselves, to hold sway over two hundred millions of Asiatics.

*Fourthly.* We should have thrown back upon us at home those serious problems to which the increasing exodus of our people has seemed to afford the healthiest solution. Now, men go and come. The lines



that weave us to our Imperial membership pass and repass so multitudinously that every year augments the strength and the intricacy of their connections. Wealth acquired in the dependencies is brought home to be expended, and in return new material of labour finds its way to the colonies. *Then*, the men who leave us will remain where their ambition keeps them, where their interests are staked, where their children are to be citizens, where their position is established. In this way, many of those bonds will be cut which ally us commercially and socially to the colonies. Imperfect as this outline of contingencies may be, it opens up a vista of grave possibilities that may at least make him pause who flippantly or ruthlessly contemplates the severance of a single possession.

My review of the Empire has prepared the way for a classification of its constituents. This is an essential preliminary to the discussion of Federation. Great errors are apt to arise, and have arisen, from confusing our dependencies together under the common term *THE COLONIES*. Some of the constituents are self-governing or partly so, like our own kingdom and certain colonies proper. Others are subject. Others are trading or naval or coaling stations, which are practically incapable of self-government.\*

1. Under the first head, along with the mother-country, I include those dependencies which I shall

\* The anti-colonial party in the Government and Parliament seem to have made a great deal of capital out of the specious confusion of the expenses of the latter with the expenses of the former in the mind of the public and some of its Parliamentary representatives.

now designate *the Colonies*. By these I mean not only the larger provinces, to which have been already accorded considerable rights of self-government, but many of those called Crown colonies, wherein the imperial power may still be said to exercise more than a superintending sway. These are the constituents which will be properly included as principal parties in any scheme of Federation ; and where they do not possess it in the requisite degree, may have autonomy conceded to them for the purposes of union.

2. The second class, embracing India and Ceylon, must for the present be exempt from a compact, the basis of which would be the equal and common citizenship of the inhabitants coming within the area of its action. In these places a very small proportion of a superior race rules by pure moral and physical force an inferior people. The Imperial Government would in a Federation hold these countries as the United States hold its territories, in a state of trust for the Empire and of pupilage for the people themselves.

3. The third class of dependencies consists of the stations for trade and various Imperial purposes. These are Heligoland, Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, the Straits Settlements, Labuan, Hongkong, the Falkland Islands, Bermuda, Ascension, St. Helena, the West African stations and Norfolk Island in the Pacific.

This classification shows on its face that we may dismiss at once from any complication, as principals in the federal compact, of the two latter classes of dependencies. Let us, therefore, consider the idea of

Federation as it relates to the provinces included in the first class; and, for convenience, I subdivide them into groups.

*a.* The British group, including England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and the adjacent islands.

*b.* The North American, or Canadian group, consisting of Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba or the Red River territory, British Columbia, and Vancouver Island.

*c.* The West Indian group; embracing our West Indian Islands, British Guiana, and British Honduras. The whole of these have very recently been placed under one military command.

*d.* The Australasian group; including New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia, Queensland, and New Zealand.

*e.* The South African group; Cape Colony and Natal, to which perhaps Mauritius and Bourbon might be attached. A proposition has recently been made, and is likely to be adopted, for a federation, comprising the two South African colonies and the Dutch Republics of Trans Vaal and the Orange River.\*

These then are the elements out of which an Imperial Confederation might be formed. They are elements varied and scattered, yet connected by bonds of sympathy in the religion and race of their predominant classes; offering points of attraction

\* See some admirable letters, "The Dutch Republics of South Africa," by F. W. Chesson. W. Tweedie. 1871.

in their community of citizenship, of language, of religion : presenting bases of union in the similarity, greater or less in degree, of their forms of government. As regards the principal members of our groups, no incongruities with each other in systems of government or in the general aims of legislation offer a serious impediment to federation. Our colonists have carried with them, along with the social customs, the administrative and legislative traditions of home, and with a qualified exception of Lower Canada, some of the West Indies, and the Cape Colonies, their laws based upon those of England. The exceptions offer no obstruction. Like Louisiana, Lower Canada, with French laws, has as a fact been united with provinces regulated by dissimilar codes.

As to forms of government, we must meet the question whether the fact that some local constitutions are less free than others of Imperial restraint would interpose a hindrance to their confederation with the rest. In colonies for instance like some of the West Indies, there is limited or no representation of the people, and the Crown agent with a few wealthy men practically govern the colony. Will it be safe to concede to such colonies greater independence in local government ? The difficulty might of course be removed by eliminating from the Federal system all such colonies. But it will be admitted that if Federation is to take place, its scope should be as wide as possible ; and indeed it will directly appear that the difficulty is not insuperable.

But this point raises questions which it would be

inexpedient to discuss without some preliminary outline of the nature and principles of federal government. "The science of federal government," as it was termed in the *Federalist*, is perhaps more exact and defined than that of any other form of human constitution. Conspicuous existing instances, and industrious philosophic commentaries on those of the past, enable us to ascertain with considerable accuracy the forms such a coalition may take, and the most probable general outline. Mr. Freeman has commenced a splendid and elaborate review of federal government, \* which must when finished become the textbook of Federalism for a long time to come. Since he published his first volume, the doctrine of Federalism has been discussed with great ability in the Canadian parliament, and the confederated Dominion of Canada has been established, in which were introduced certain modifications of the federal form and principle of a character peculiarly appropriate to the case of an Imperial Confederation.

It may be said that the leading object of pure Federalism is to secure for each party to the federal compact the utmost independence in its own affairs, while it aims at combining into one central authority such forces as are best adapted to secure the common welfare and common defence. Thus, within the coalition, local life and vigour are not merged in an overpowering and centralised despotism; while externally, and towards all other nations, it presents a single and serried front.

\* "History of Federal Government," vol. i. Macmillan. 1863.

A leading distinction between possible forms of federal relation needs to be observed at the outset of an examination into the conditions of federal union. There may be a federal compact between several governments which brings the federal authority into relation only to those governments and into no direct relation to the people; and there may be a federal union between states in which the federal power, co-ordinately with the state power, acts directly on all the citizens. It will presently be seen that not to regard this distinction would introduce hopeless confusion into the investigation of our subject; that in fact it lies at the very root of our inquiry. Mr. Freeman's definition is so clear that I cannot do better than transcribe it:—

“In the one class the federal power represents only the governments of the several members of the union; its immediate action is confined to those governments; its powers consist simply in issuing those requisitions to the state governments, which, when within the proper limits of the federal authority, it is the duty of those governments to carry out. If men or money be needed for federal purposes, the federal power will demand them of the several state governments, which will raise them in such ways as each will think best. In the other class, the federal power will be, in the strictest sense, a government which, in the first class, it can hardly be called. It will act not only on the governments of the several states, but directly on every citizen of those states. It will be, in short, a government co-ordinate with the state governments; sovereign in its own sphere, as they are sovereign in their sphere. It will be a government with the usual branches—legislative, executive, and judicial—with the direct power of taxation, and the other usual powers of a government; with its army, its navy, its civil service, and all the usual apparatus of a government, all bearing directly on every citizen of the union, without any reference to the governments of the several states. The state administration, within its own range, will be carried on as freely as if there were no such thing as an union; the federal administration, within its own range, will be carried on as freely as if there were no such thing



as a separate state. This last class is what writers on International law call a *Composite State or Supreme Federal Government*. The former class they commonly remand to the head of mere Confederacies, or at most *Systems of Confederate States*."

I would now ask the reader to observe how it is that our colonies, even those most autonomous, are not in federal relation to ourselves. That sovereign equality of state with state, which is the criterion of a federal constituency does not at present exist.\* They are pure dependencies unrepresented in the central Imperial Parliament. But Mr. Freeman has pointed out how nearly to the federal relation that of the colonies to Great Britain already approaches. "The colony may have the same internal independence as the canton, but it differs in having no voice in the general concerns of the empire." Hence to endue the colonies with this right, this representation, would be to convert a dependent into a federal relation, to lay indeed the basis of confederation.

Next I remark that in the Canadian Confederation we find an example of the form that federal government might naturally at first assume in a Confederated British Empire. For it is likely that we cannot leap at once to a perfect constitution—that this will require to be matured through a gradual process of adaptation. By the constitution of Canada the Sovereign retains her supremacy as the repository of executive power. It is not a president elected by the people, but her viceroy, who in the Dominion Government represents that power. Each state moreover has a lieutenant-governor, endued with some of the

\* Freeman, p. 77, *note* 1, and p. 25.



powers of the executive, who is appointed by the governor-general. The federal upper house or legislative council, instead of being elective, as in the neighbouring republic, is also nominated by the Crown, the members holding office during life.

The lower house, called the House of Commons, is elected by the people of the whole Confederation. With I believe one exception the individual provinces are content with a lieutenant governor and one elective branch of the legislation. Their local matters therefore are interfered with by the supreme authority only in the appointment of the executive. So far this is a modification of a pure federal system, by the interposition, to this limited extent, of the central authority in the local government. It remains to be seen whether this could be permanently maintained; but at all events it would be a preparation for the purer state independence of an ideally perfect confederation.

I now return for a moment to dispose of the question whether those less free colonies to which I have above referred, could properly be brought within the scope of Imperial Confederation. I judge that the natural condition of such a confederation would be the assignment to each of the colonies in our first class, of independence in its local affairs, excepting only the appointment of its governor, with the correlative right of representation in the federal or Imperial Government. It is the deficiency of this correlative right which must inevitably convert independence into separation. But it is not essential for the purposes of a confederation that the local govern-

ments should be similar in form. Some state constitutions may be more popular than others. In one there might be household suffrage and representation by population, in another a limited constituency with a considerable property qualification.\* So far therefore as relates to federal organization the oligarchic governments existing in some of our colonies need oppose no obstruction. The real difficulty will arise in determining how far it will be safe to concede to some of these colonies local independence. The experiment of representative government has failed in Jamaica, and there we have returned to rule by a governor and Council. In British Guiana a governor and four other officials are supplemented in the legislature by five representatives of a limited constituency. So long as there is some popular and local basis of government this might still continue. The tendency in all confederations is the assimilation of the constituents, and the spread of education within, combined with the influences from without, would gradually prepare such constitutions for greater breadth and freedom. Even Mr. Adderley's faith seems strong enough to enable him to look forward to a time when freer institutions may exist in such colonies.†

Having thus ascertained, with some accuracy, what separate provinces of our dominions would properly enter into the scheme of federation, the next inquiry will be as to the general form of federal system appli-

\* See Freeman, vol i, p. 257.

† "Colonial Policy," etc., p. 222, 223.

cable to the exigencies of such an union. Shall it be the "System of Confederated States," or the "Supreme Federal Government?"—a league such as was suggested by a recent royal commission at the Antipodes, or an Imperial Federal Constitution?

The answer to this question must depend on the objects chiefly to be set before the people of the Empire in proposing any such association at all. The reason for demanding a change is the instability of the existing system. Some of its weaknesses have been stated with their possible, nay almost positive dangers of rupture. Yet it is a strange and inspiriting fact that, spite of these defects, there is in none of our colonies any wide-spread desire for anything but permanence and security of Imperial relations. Their attitude is that of puzzled and cautious anxiety—not of revolution—quite the reverse. This brings forward at once a prominent object—namely, the maintenance of the bond of common citizenship. Few colonists are ready to throw away the glorious privilege of being Britons; few desire to lose the ægis of British protection. For this they are willing, as we have seen to do and to dare much. In return they must have the correlative rights of British citizenship—namely, a voice in the general government. This they would not possess in a mere confederacy. That indeed would be little better than the existing system. The tendency of such an association would be to isolate the interests and ambitions of each state more and more from the rest, and to create a loyalty of citizenship rather to its own Government than to the Federal Council with which it transacted a species

of diplomatic business. I take it, therefore, that the form of federal government best adapted to meet the case would be a form in which there was a direct action of the Supreme Government on the citizen, and a direct reciprocal interest of the citizen in the Supreme Government. A second object will be the organization of common defence, and its resulting sense of security. It is almost lamentable to observe the half-trembling anxiety of the Canadian Parliament about the sincerity of our guarantees of protection in case of war. They too evidently are afraid to trust our economists. In a federal system these guarantees would be indisputable, so that the smallest state would be assured that it could not be sacrificed to the indifference or parsimony of the greatest. The effect of this would be double : on the one hand a sense of security to each member of the Imperial union ; on the other, the respect it would of necessity exact from foreign states. This object also would seem to be best attained under the form of a Supreme Federal Government. Under the alternate system the Empire would be restored to its present inconstancy. The central government would occupy much the same position as the Imperial government occupies at present. For instance, its demand upon a local legislature for contribution to some federal expense, might be met, as it would be now, with evasion or refusal, and it would be unable to carry home to the body of citizens those arguments for acquiescing in its conduct and assenting to its policy which would be available were their direct representatives engaged in Federal legislation. Indeed, when we consider it but

in outline, it seems useless to discuss the chances of so loose a federal system. The first war would probably crack its high strung chords.

Other objects to be sought in a closer union would be gradual assimilation of laws—an object, by the way, which was directly avowed and sought for by the Canadian Federalists, and is always a strong argument in favour of federation—*rapprochement* in commercial policy, the expansion on truer, freer, and more widely acting principles of mutual commercial relations, security to those relations under the broad wings of a confederation, the increased availability of capital, of labour, of talent, throughout and upon a vast Imperial field, whereon equal rights and equal safety were assured to all.

The main object I have left to the last. It is the aim upon the surface, namely, to arrive at the most just, most convenient and practical form of Imperial combination. This is the general problem; discussed from many points of view and under constantly changing conditions, from Lord Durham's time to the present. How, with justice to the British taxpayer, and with justice to the enterprising British settler, to maintain unbroken the Imperial dominion? In blind and blundering efforts to solve that problem, right and wrong principles have been confounded, just demands have been put forward on untenable grounds, good policy has been pursued by mistaken methods, and difficulties, instead of being mastered, have been stifled, thrown aside or buried, only to rise up again to fresh administrations with more troublesome liveliness than before. Had our ministers long since



resolved on carrying out a federal policy, had they nursed the rising independence of the colonies, while they maintained with care the super-eminent claims of the mother-country ; had they facilitated the outgoing of our dense population, and fostered the vigour of young communities, not by wasting millions on Imperial armaments, but by organising and encouraging local means of defence ; above all, had they looked forward with a wise foresight to the day when each of these communities as it grew up to a strengthful manhood, should be recognised, like a territory in the United States, as an equal member of the Imperial family, it is impossible but that we should to-day have looked upon a more glorious, more powerful, more prosperous and united empire, instead of on a hazardous organism apparently trembling to dissolution. It has been suggested by some colonists whose opinions are entitled to weight, that a Colonial Council, like that of India, should sit in London, to assist with its advice the Colonial Office. This suggestion, good only because it recognises the effeteness of that administration and its want of counsel from some quarter of the heavens, needs but to be stated to condemn itself. I have shown, I hope conclusively, that any connection other than one based on colonial representation at Imperial headquarters, is a rope of sand. Every day that increases colonial independence without the compensating balance of an enlarged interest in Imperial government is endangering the poise of empire. A non-representative council, composed of men however experienced in colonial affairs, and endued solely with delibera-

tive powers, will not supply the missing link. Even were the council to be selected by the colonies—and to be so far representative, its limited scope and authority would be so obvious an imbecility, that no colony would be blind enough to accept it as a boon.

Another proposal I have already dismissed as impracticable. One cannot gravely discuss the suggested admission of a few stray representatives of the far-off millions into the body which, at one and the same time, unites parochial legislation with the concerns of empire. With what success could they urge home upon the prejudiced majority questions of colonial right? This would be as illusory a representation as that just discarded.

We appear to be driven from all points to one plan of establishing Imperial unity—that is to say, a Federal Legislative Union under a Supreme Federal Government. That this, moreover, must be representative; and as to the materials of union, the representatives must be drawn from the whole of the groups enumerated in the first class. This and no other, though you box the compass of constitutional possibilities in search of it! When we have reached that conclusion, and have to some extent ascertained the desirability and necessity—the general principles, elements, and conditions of such an union, we cannot for the present advisedly go further. Thus far it has been my aim by this essay, to advance the question—to bring it a few steps beyond the point at which I left it in January. This may at least give a clearer view of its difficulties, of its importance, of its prospects. If we can establish our case so far, there need be no fear



but a practical scheme will be framed by united counsel and compromise. It is not an affair of days, or months, but of years; not of immediate demonstration, but of the patient, uphill struggling of men animated with vivid faith—a faith built upon the past, and trustful in the possibilities of the future; nay, it is not a dream, but a sober problem, to be worked out by men of tact and action.

A solitary difficulty, like the pillar of salt, stands up—a sign of retrospective despair, of dead, inane deficiency of hope. Distance, enchantress of the far-off view, is looked upon as the intractable witch of confederation. It is said to be chimerical to talk of a government by representatives of provinces stretching both ways to the Antipodes. But it should be remembered that the Antipodes, in point of time, are almost as near to us as for years California was to Washington; that Halifax and Montreal are in that respect closer to London than British Columbia, shortly to be added to the Confederation, is to Ottawa. It may safely be said that every year we advance nearer to our dependencies both in time and facility of intercourse. At no very distant date steam communication with Australia will be so frequent, regular, and rapid, and the telegraph system so enlarged and cheap, that no practical difficulty would impede the working of a representative federal government. For we must not overlook the fact that such a government is exactly that form of government which is least affected by this consideration. The possession of so large an independence as belongs to the separate states, leaving as it does but a limited range of subjects to the

central government, and those generally of a character not requiring, as sometimes occurs in provincial legislation, the rapid declaration of public opinion, reduces that difficulty to a minimum. The principal effect, supposing our constitutional system to be adapted to a federal form, would be to make a general appeal to the federal constituencies very rare indeed ; perhaps so rare that, when it occurred, it would be almost tantamount to a revolution. To counterbalance this defect, and provide for a thorough understanding between the constituencies and the representative parliament, the duration of the latter would probably have to be fixed at some more limited time than at present. The real life and vigour of the empire will lie not so much in the action of its federal head, as in the vitality of its members, and the general co-ordinating policy of the supreme power. That which is chiefly to be aimed at respecting the subjects of federal interest is, that throughout the empire there should be formed upon them an enlightened public opinion, giving a general drift to a powerful administrative, legislative, and diplomatic action. When distance is set up as a barrier to a great collaboration of interests and opinions, it should be recollected that at this moment there is not a citizen of New York who, owing to the enterprise of its newspapers, may not every morning form a tolerably accurate opinion upon the events that happened in Europe on the previous day, or safely make his business calculations upon commercial information of a few hours old supplied him from London and Paris.

I offer but one other consideration, at the close of

so extended an argument. We cannot overvalue the advantages to the world's peace and progress of large states or confederations. They reduce the possibilities of war between the smaller communities which compose them, by creating the bond of common citizenship, and subjecting all to a permanent and supreme arbitration in cases of dispute. Well therefore may it be argued that he who lends a hand to break up a great community of states is incidentally committing a crime against civilization. Professor Seeley has conceived the magnificent idea of making war impossible by creating an Universal Confederation. However visionary the suggestion may appear before the time when the lion and the lamb shall be seen to lie down together, is it not a practical thing to advocate the converse of his proposition—to urge that existing combinations of states should be sacredly maintained? This is the spirit that seems to hover now above the chaos of nations. Thus Germany has reduced the number of chances of war in Europe by uniting together several possible antagonists. Thus it is that Austria is striving to confederate hostile elements in one communion of peace and prosperity. Thus has the United States purchased peace for the future by costly sacrifice in the present, to perpetuate the grand combination of her powerful republics. Thus also may we, if we have but the wisdom and the faith to attempt it, bind broad and shining and enduring bands of peace about the circuit of the world.

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# TWO SOLUTIONS

(FRASER'S MAGAZINE, April, 1871.)





NOVEMBER the fifteenth. To-day a young man was shown into my room at the Temple. I had seen him several times before ; his name is a common and unpleasant one. A long time since he came to me and asked if I would buy some card-racks. I did not want them—cards are made for burning, not keeping ; but there was something in the man's face that touched me, and I drew from him how that he was a mechanical worker in dentistry ; how that he was married, his wife ' expecting to be confined ; ' how that all his tools had been one by one pledged until he had not the instruments to work at his calling, even were a million false grinders needed for middle-class jaws to-morrow. What could I do but give him—*lend* him, of course, he called it—what he asked ? He came again months after, with the same story. Again. The same tale—the same help. And now here he was once more. I was annoyed at the fellow's importunity—unjust judge that I was of him ; but when I looked up I saw a change upon the man that drove down my resentment—down to Hell, whence it came

—and made me stand up before a sacred statue of sorrow. The man, five feet one or so, slight, pallid as the paper whereon I write, with an odd lustre in his eyes, which were rimmed with the red of weeping, and the wild bold black hair twisting over his white forehead—that horridly intellectual front! which the man ought not to have had, since he must needs live like a brute; which forced me to sympathy, when, according to the rigid maxims of modern economy, I ought to have had none: the man, with a shiveringly thin yet decent coat, stood there and began to speak—

‘Mr.—, I hope you’ll forgive’—But as his teeth chattered and his knees knocked together, racking my sensibilities most abominably, I put him down into a chair and said—

‘Ah! your wife is dead—is she not?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘When did she die?’

‘Last Sunday, sir.’

A pause. I cannot tell you what was told by one to the other—it was not in words. At length I said gently—

‘Have you any children?’

‘No, sir (crying); she’d just been confined, sir. It was a terrible hard time, sir, and the child only lived a fortnight. She took on so to lose it; that’s what made her worse and killed her. You know, sir, she’d had four of them, and this was the only one born alive.’

I groaned. O you two human idiots! Here is this slim, small man of twenty-four or so, married to some slim, small woman, companion of his famine-

stricken life these last few years, now lying dead in his garret, and here he tells me, while the liquid sadness scorches his eyes, how she took it so bitterly to heart she could not produce a pledge of their misery, as to fret herself to death !

· O you two silly, infatuated lovers ! Why had you not read John Stuart Mill ? Ought you not to have resisted your brutal instincts and restrained your thriftless ecstasies ? And you, Dead Fool, ought you not to have been glad when it fell out your overmastering passion brought no new burden to your misery and that of him you loved ? Poor wretches, both of you—faithful, though, and loving in your wretchedness, how intensely human you are ! How much that is beautiful—nay, almost heavenly—is there in your execrable imbecility !

Thus I thought, the man sitting there, while the slim, dead woman—that was lay away in the fog-shrouded attic, dead of sorrow for a sorrow that was dead.

— I dared not tell the man it was well, for I saw he had so loved her he might, upon the hint, have sprung at my throat like a tiger. So I said :

‘ Well, now what do you wish to do ? She is not buried yet ? ’

‘ No, sir ; that’s what I wanted to see you for. I wanted some employment to help me to—’

‘ Stay. If I lend you—will that be of any assistance for the present ?

‘ Oh, yes : thank you, Mr——.’

‘ Then you must live. How do you mean to live ? ’

‘ My tools are pawned, or I could get work. I have copied for a law stationer sometimes.’

‘ Can you write, then ?’

‘ Very well ; I was educated : my father was a surgeon.’

I trembled to think of this young man’s sorrows. Intelligent—there was his large white forehead—educated, born a gentleman, married and lived a pauper—a dead love lying in the attic there—and he now here before me, thin and hungry, yet with one agony overruling that of hunger, how to get Her decently buried out of the damned world.

I wonder if he were better or worse for the fierce purgatory through which he had come faithful from first to last to the faithful dead.

The incident set me a-thinking again about the problem it suggests. I hope no one in England conceals from himself that this problem is one of a seriousness intensifying from day to day. If he does, his is the security of a man sitting on the edge of a cliff, an earthquake rumbling in the distance. The problem, according to the gospel of some social philosophers, is : How are you to thwart certain strong human instincts so as to prevent them from turning to social and political inconvenience ? According to some plain-thinking people like myself, it is : Admitting certain inherent human and naturally right and healthy propensities, can you not devise how to let them play without danger, nay with advantage, to the morality and wealth of the community ?

Here were a young man and a young woman drawn together by subtle and puissant influences, which it

is as absurd for a philosopher to overlook as for a statesman to despise. You may preach 'prudence,' but you cannot wholly stifle these passions: you may wish the young to be wise, but you must legislate on the known and incontestable fact that the wisdom and prudence you admire are those of the Stoic, not of the ordinary man—are far above their average characteristics—are clearly contrary to the impulse of their nature. Doubtless these two persons might have postponed marriage. So far their conduct would have been satisfactory to Malthus. But unless Malthus were able as well to warrant that they should postpone indulgence—and in how many cases would he agree to warrant that?—I for one strongly protest that for themselves and for society that which actually happened was every way better than the alternative. Give me for hopeful citizenship this sorrowful poor man who has loved and sacrificed with purity, rather than the man successful, with withered virtue and a roué's heart. Give me the pure dead body in the garret there, as a better thing for State and society than—God save us if the other can be limned in words! Nay, I protest that it is needless for those terrible alternatives to be put before the youth and strength of England! Must we legislate for what men might be when we can legislate for what they are and ought to be?

Some time since, in a little book of mine, I printed a chapter entitled 'Malthus and Man.' Therein an attempt was made to put in a concrete form the very problem now in discussion. In a satirical sheet published every Saturday, which wavers between lively

expeditions into the domains of politics or philosophy and playful forays into the region of the *demi-monde*, a 'Reviewer' minted at my expense, the epigram that instead of 'Malthus and Man,' the chapter should have been called 'Arithmetic and Sentiment,' and he proceeded forthwith to take a scrap of my implied argument and flip it with his whip of ridicule. The remark, like many more coined in the same mint, was more brilliant in the lacquer than true in the metal. I had neither intended nor attempted in that chapter to solve the terrible problem; but I clearly did try to present it in a definite shape, and to show that one solution pressed upon us by philosophers, lady-disquisitionists, and young startling Amberley sophists, was inhuman, immoral, unpractical—and therefore one that must be rejected. That issue the 'Reviewer' carefully avoided to discuss.

What I desired to say in that chapter I may briefly state in a single proposition; and I must needs state it plainly. Men and women will, and we may take it in looking at human society, practically, must, satisfy the instinct for consorting together. Abstinence from marriage generally finds an alternative in illegitimate intercourse. Marriage without progeny generally involves, in itself, physical injury and moral debasement; and in its effects, as a fact, vitiates society. Let it be understood that I am speaking in the general, and on a broad view of human experience—more from the point of view of practical politics than of religious or philosophic ethics.

Then I say a legislator should legislate in accordance with human instincts in so far as they are



healthy and good. This human instinct is admittedly, in its origin, healthy and good, while its repression is admittedly hazardous to morals: therefore you must show an inevitable necessity to warrant your legislating against it. Does this necessity exist?

The 'arithmeticians' so called by the 'Reviewer' have assumed that it does. They point to the undeniable over-population, gendering pauperism and innumerable evils—a cumulative production of non-producers and dead weights in the community: they say that there is no legitimate way of disposing of these; and therefore the remedy is to go to the fountain-head, and, just as you would regulate the market for calicos, or linens, or hardware, stop the production. I suppose I am a 'sentimentalist' if I wedge into the argument here a remark on the essential difference between the productive instrument in the case of goods and of children? The factory machinery has no soul, or will, or moral nature, to be affected by your operations. It stops at your command, and its voice is dead. But the other is a complicated sensible being, influenced either for good or evil by the check you put upon him. He has impulses which resist your rigid law and coercive power. Therefore the question respecting the latter is not, like the former, a simple one of supply and demand, but a highly complex problem of social and moral and political influences acting on and from certain intellectual and sensitive beings, when you try to force them to cease their inconvenient productiveness.

Bearing in mind that distinction, as one that cuts



away any jot of analogy with supply and demand theories in trade economy, let every one first ask : Whether the arithmetician's premiss is true ? He counts heads, and says *There are too many*. Such a proposition as that is evidently a relative one. To be conclusively relevant, it must be true irrespective of circumstances. *Illustration* : A father looks round upon a dozen indolent children and cries 'There are too many.' He has 3,000*l.* a year, and spends 5,000*l.* If he must spend at the rate of 5,000*l.* per annum for twelve children, he clearly has too many ; but on the other hand the condition is obviously not imperative.

Another father, more economic in his management, with only 1,500*l.* a year, of which he saves 300*l.* might look complacently on his thirteen children whom he had educated and brought up in homely fashion to work and win their way, and might even regret that he had no more.

Surely one need not in words extend that illustration to the body politic ?

Before you are justified in resorting to the anti-human policy, you must prove that the real difficulty does not lie in the non-administration or mal-administration of your resources, but in over-production of children. It is monstrous enough to propound as an economic principle the solution of a difficulty by a process demoralising to society—still worse to propose such a reform until every other possible solution is exhausted. Now in this case there is another solution.

For consider. You, Paterfamilias, may not only be unthriftilly handling your income—so, for instance,

as to starve half your family while you are overfeeding the other half: you may have failed to ascertain and utilize all your resources. Was it absolutely necessary in the present condition of our Imperial assets, that the love of my poor young grinder-pest and his angel-widow should vegetate and die in such sickly darkness as it did? Were the State father and mother to blame for their indifference to means which, well used, would have almost made the incident impossible? If the rough coast-line with its fierce water-ward shut us in from external intercourse—if England were only England—if for our growing numbers there must needs be found sustentation from her bosom alone, the ‘arithmetician’s’ case would wear a terribly rigid front. But it is not so. Let us apply again to our illustration. Suppose Paterfamilias with his dozen expenses suffered half his estate to lie in uncultivated wilderness, you would laugh at him when he cried out upon the hardship of his exorbitant progeny.

‘Why, you old fool, six of your children are big enough and strong enough to work in that wild land, and you say you haven’t enough to keep them! Send them there; give it to them; help them to begin to cultivate it. Hush your silly outcry against Mrs. John for her fecundity, and use all your resources before you complain of numbers. Why, I believe you could do with half a dozen more, with all that land in your fist!’

Whereto let us suppose Paterfamilias to reply: ‘Mere sentiment, my dear sir, and worse economy: don’t you see it would only increase any expenses?’

It would cost me so much additional per annum to begin, for cultivation of the land, and the establishment of my children. No, no; we'll live together, thank you, where one joint of beef does for all.' How easily you could answer that the first expense would more than repay itself even into the paternal coffers, let alone the fresh provision for the children! But you would be inclined to leave that egregiously hopeless old dotard to the ruin he deserved. The same remonstrance demands—in the name and for the sake of England's greatness—an answer from English statesmanship. On that answer depends Imperial ruin or Imperial glory.

I think the reader will have begun to see that the true arithmetic is on the side of those who not only count heads, but count resources. This we urge in antagonism to a false premiss and a vile conclusion. It has now to be determined, here and soon, whether our Ministers shall pursue the policy propounded by inhuman theorists or that dictated by simple and humane self-interest. One or other of these two solutions must be accepted—the third and only other remedy is Revolution. The numbers may be reduced by the sword; but that sword will be wielded, not by governors and philosophers, not by peers and parliament, but by the crushed and tortured masses of the people, waking up to dreadful despair of any other remedy, and putting forth their omnipotent strength in a blind, relentless rage. Terrible to the feasting Philistines will be the vengeance of burly Samson whose sorrows have been their sport.

Thank God, we are not yet too many. We have

untold and untouched wealth hoarded for a limitless offspring. The true problem is not how to stop the increase of a noble race, but how to distribute its active forces over our vast estate. Let English governors throw themselves into the invigorating energies of colonisation. Stir up the whole Empire. Unite its members in firmer union, upon more just and inter-communicative and flexible constitutions; open its boundless capacities to the enterprise of a happily increasing people; get the workman back what you can of the birthright you have mismanaged and are seeking to fritter away; thus, and thus only, will all which tends to social health and individual well-being find a full scope for action.

The alternative I can only view with horror. To inoculate English society with French vices; to destroy our unique home-life and home-ideas; to bewray the sentiments which have established the purities of our society and glorified us in the eyes of nations; nay, to depreciate at once our manners and our race, is the remedy, God help us! offered by the thinkers, followed by the strange women and chattering disciples of the social philosophy. The two systems may be seen and compared in America. Down East, women, by practices there notorious, thwart the natural effects of marriage; and you may ascertain for yourself, or read it admitted by medical observers among them, that they are degenerate and degenerating from the grand old stock. In the wide West or in Canada, 'where children are blessings,' and no foul principles or practices discourage the beneficent increase, you may see huge joyous families

and a sturdy generation fit to be the sons and daughters of Freedom.

To me it is an ever saddening experience to live at the heart of this unrivalled Empire and to watch it pulsating with lessening vitality and force ; to see its life-stream turning inward on itself and tending to congestion, not circulating with healthy flow to and from the utmost extremities. I know not what to think of an age so degenerate as to have lost the impulse of growth—as to be unmoved by the spur of rivalry—as to be meek amid the scorn of nations. Samson shorn of his locks in the lap of faithless luxury were no inapt figure of this majestic State when clipped of its colonial strength by the feminine fingers that might at least have warned it. There is still hope—there is yet time. A hedging Ministry, a selfish House, trembling peers, and mercenary tradesmen, may be willing to sell for present peace and comfort the future glory of a long-ennobled race ; but there is some generous chivalry at the heart of the people, a healthy common-sense, an upspringing life and ambition, a dim but gradually clearing appreciation of good to be won, of rights to be maintained—a cleaving sympathy of English heart to English heart all the world over ; that once directed into channels of noble impulse will sweep away our droning obstructives into the depths of eternal obscurity.

I began at the pauper root of England's evil—I would end at the hopeful blossoming of England's good. Here is the question for us all. Shall that root grow up to bitterness, bearing its apples of Sodom, its

wild grapes of vice and misery and death ? Or shall it, tended by pious hands, flourish a comely tree, with branches great and stately, far-spreading, and yielding perennial fruit ?

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